

THE
NATURAL DAUGHTER.

WITH
PORTRAITS OF
THE LEADENHEAD FAMILY.
A NOVEL.

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kc. kc. kc.

— Can such things be,
Without our special wonder ? SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

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THE
NATURAL DAUGHTER.

CHAP. I.

ON a bright April morning in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, Mr. Alderman Bradford, with his wife and daughters, Martha and Julia, set out from Crutched-Friars for the benefit of the Bath waters. In our journey through life we are destined to meet with travellers of every denomination; but the most disgusting of all the various species we are created to

VOL. I. B encounter,

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encounter, is the opulent and ostentatious traveller. Without any motive but that of exciting attention, such a being measures the path of thorns and roses, sickening with satiety, and eternally extorting either our wonder or our pity: we wonder at the blind prodigality of Fortune, and we pity the wretch who, though revelling in her favours, seems incapable of enjoying even the shadow of felicity.

Such a traveller was Peregrine Bradford. A new coach splendidly emblazoned with richly fancied heraldry; four coal-black steeds, which might have graced the triumphal car of an Hector or an Alexander; and two gaudy-liveried attendants, who wore upon their jackets glowing samples of their master's store of wealth and love of ostentation, composed the outward characteristics of the pompous invalid: whose luxurious life had been the bane of his constitution,
and

and whose enormous fortune had deprived him of almost every felicity.

Those who have too much power to gratify their inclinations, are no less wretched than those who have too little. Satiety is a more uneasy sensation than necessity: and the greatest blessings of life, when fairly appreciated, tend most effectually to shorten our existence.— Wealth produces indolence; indolence is the parent of lassitude, and lassitude incapacitates the mind for every human enjoyment. Mr. Bradford was wealthy without being happy; he was weary, though not laborious; he was sad without cause for sorrow; irritable without being crossed in his inclinations; ostentatious without being generous; haughty, though not dignified; indefatigable in the toil of disobliging; and, though he lived only for the world, he followed every pro-

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penalty of his perverse nature, in defiance of the world's opinion.

Peregrine was verging on his fifty-seventh year, when he first began to recollect that he was mortal. His temper was not softened by the indulgence he experienced. His person was corpulent and unwieldy by the excess of luxurious living : his enemies laughed at him ; his friends pitied him ; and his family, could they have forgotten the bonds of propinquity, would have despised him.

Within the gaudy vehicle were placed the breathing appendages of his domestic establishment who were honoured with the name of the family ; a wife, whose fair round face displayed both health and plenty ; whose brow was settled into a tacit placidity, by that softener of human sorrows, Resignation ; while a smile adorned her lip : but whether it was a
smile

smile of conscious pleasure, or of half-subdued contempt, I will leave the physiognomist to determine.

Opposite to Mrs. Bradford sat her youngest born, her favourite Julia. While Martha, the eldest and least beloved, occupied the place *vis-à-vis* to her papa, whose gouty foot, enveloped tenfold in flannel, rested on her knee, while his tongue every moment uttered the complainings of a discontented spirit.

Julia was small in stature; fair, delicately formed, humble, obedient, complacent, and accommodating. Her face was pretty, her features being regular, and her eyes soft and languishing. The romantic tendency of her mind seemed to influence it even in the choice of her habiliments: the most delicate colours added to the transparency of her complexion; and she seemed, like the

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snow-drop, to droop at every breeze that the soft breath of April wafted through the carriage.

Martha, wrapped in a convenient travelling-coat of scarlet cloth, with a beaver hat, and a face full of dimples, talked gaily, laughed heartily, though sometimes, by suddenly darting forward to make shrewd and lively observations, discomposing the dignified countenance of the suffering Mr. Bradford.

Martha had just attained her twenty-second year; Julia was three years younger: Martha was giddy, wild, buxom, good-natured, and bluntly sincere in the tenor of her conversation. They had been separated ever since their infancy. The eldest was sent to a country boarding-school for education, because she was gay, robust, and noisy; while Julia passed her hours of study
under

under the care of a French governess in the splendid mansion of Crutched-Friars. Thus prepared for the great world, the sisters started upon society: the gentle Julia, admired as a model of feminine excellence; and the unsophisticated Martha considered as a mere masculine hoyden.

As soon as the coach passed the barrier of Hyde Park, Mr. Bradford for the first time since their embarkation, addressed his companions: "You see, girls," said he, with a look of more pomposity than wisdom; "you see that I am going to Bath, with all this expence, merely with a view to make your fortunes."

"I thought that they were already made, sir, and that you went to Bath for the benefit of your health," said Martha.

"You had no business to think," said Mr. Bradford; "it was your duty to listen."

"You wish me then to be thoughtless, sir?" cried Martha.

"Be quiet, child," said Mrs. Bradford, with a tone of reprehension; "you know that your father will not bear contradiction; and, in his state of suffering, it is natural to be peevish."

"There now!" exclaimed Mr. Bradford; "peevish! I wish you had my gout, and we should then see whose temper is the most fretful."

"I did but speak, my love—"

"You have no business ever to speak; cannot you be content to ride in your own coach-and-four, but you must pick quarrels for nothing. You know as well as I do, that I am impatient to marry the girls off. Juley deserves a
good

good husband, and Patty wants one to keep her in order; for she is beyond my management."

"You never tried me, sir," said Martha; "for I don't believe that since I was three years old, I have passed six months in your presence."

"There again! eternal reproaches! always grumbling; never satisfied; can nothing teach you good manners? Mrs. Bradford, why don't you speak; are you dumb?"

"I did not suppose that it would be agreeable. You are so out of humour that it is difficult to know how to please you."

"We'll return to Crutched-Friars," said Mr. Bradford; "I won't throw away my money, and hear abuse into the bargain. Since I set foot in the carriage you have done nothing but fret and contradict me." The coach-

man was ordered to turn back, and Julia bursting into tears, conjured her father to consider his own health beyond all other things; and to compose his nerves, which were so cruelly agitated by her sister's unaccountable behaviour. Mrs. Bradford was silently acquiescent, when a sudden jolt of the carriage threw Mr. Bradford on his knees; he roared aloud with agony; Mrs. Bradford shrieked; Julia fainted;—and, terrible to relate, Martha could not refrain from laughing.

The group was now thrown into such complete confusion, that to proceed or to return seemed alike impracticable: the coach was stopped, the invalid, with some difficulty, was re-seated; Julia's sensibility dissolved in tears; and Martha sincerely felt for the pain which her father suffered.

“ If

“ If this is travelling in style, God keep me from elegance !” cried Mr. Bradford ; “ this comes of vanity, and obliging a pack of whimsical women, who do not know their own minds five minutes together :—then they will go, and then they won’t.”

“ Who ordered the coach to return,” inquired Martha.

“ Who bought the coach, and who has a right to burn the coach, if he pleases ?” interrupted Mr. Bradford : “ Coachman, go back to the city :—I have changed my mind ; I won’t stir an inch with these troublesome women.”—The coachman obeyed, and the cavalcade accordingly moved back towards Crutched-Friars.

C H A P. II.

READER, have you ever seen a coquet struggling betwixt the conflicts of pride and inclination? Have you ever seen a restive horse spurred onward, and yet persevering in a retrograde motion, which marked the obstinate temper of the animal? Have you observed a skiff in a storm, borne at the will of the surge, and labouring to put to sea, though contrary gales retarded its progress? If thou hast seen such things, imagine the situation of Peregrine Bradford, while he reflected that the new coach, the new horses, and the new liveries, had been purchased to no purpose!

As they returned through Kensington, Mrs. Bradford thinking to sooth her suffering partner, ventured once more to utter her opinion. "Indeed,
my

my love," said she, taking his hand and smiling; "I have no great opinion of the Bath waters. I hear various accounts of them; they are of an inflammatory quality, and you are already a little irritable; besides Bath is a very expensive place, and we sober citizens are always better in our own sphere."—Mr. Bradford bit his lip and looked angry.—"Not but you have a right to do what you please with your fortune," continued Mrs. Bradford. "Heaven knows you worked hard enough to get it; toiled late and early; and rose your name from nothing, by your own merit: Perhaps all the great folks we should meet with cannot say as much."

"The wise ones would say less," cried Martha.

"Dear mama! how you talk!" said Julia; "greatness consists in worth."

"And

"And who is worth more than I?" cried Mr. Bradford.

"But your worth is not of the kind which Julia means," said Martha.

"Who wanted your interpretation?" cried Mr. Bradford; "you were glad enough to go jaunting to Bath; you were glad enough to snap at a husband; but if you do not mind your temper, you will not keep him long."

"Sweetness of temper will not always make an husband amiable," said Mrs. Bradford sighing.

"But it is a very necessary qualification for those who are in want of one," cried the invalid. "If you had not been good tempered I never should have thought of marrying you; for God knows, you had no other recommendation."

"Some

"Some virtues at least, sir, are evident in my mother's character," said Martha; "and I think you may name patience among the number."

"What should make her otherwise than patient?" inquired Mr. Bradford. "Has she not every thing that can render a woman happy? Is she not envied by all her acquaintance; and shall I not leave her the richest widow on the east side of St. Paul's?"

"What signifies flattering one with hopes," said Mrs. Bradford. "God knows! I do not look forward to such good fortune."

"I warrant you would not remain a widow six months," said Mr. Bradford; "you would be looking out for some blockhead or other, to torment you for the remainder of your days."

"Never!" interrupted Mrs. Bradford; "the memory of my first husband
would

would always prevent the possibility of my taking a second."

"That's very fine talking," cried the invalid; "but I wish I could only put you to the trial."

"I wish you could, with all my soul!" sighed Mrs. Bradford; "the world should then see how I would lament you. My sorrow should not last while my weeds were worn, as some widows do, I promise you."

"The time will come when you will have an opportunity of proving your words," said Mr. Bradford, sighing.

"Pray Heaven it may, my love! and the sooner the better," replied his wife.

"Martha would not act so by an husband," cried the invalid. "She would forget him before her mourning was threadbare."

"That would depend upon his value, sir," interrupted Martha; "in all human

human probability my feelings would not resemble those of my mother, for the chance is a million to one that I should not have such a husband to lament."

"God forbid!" sighed Mrs. Bradford. Martha could not help smiling.

"Well, I am glad that we are going back," added Mrs. Bradford, after a short pause. "I hate the thoughts of making new acquaintances; and I really think that none but people of consequence ought to travel."

"And who is of more consequence than myself?" inquired the invalid peevishly.

"My mother means persons of rank and title," said Martha.

"I can buy a title," cried Mr. Bradford; "but a title cannot always buy a citizen."

They

They now passed a chaise and four, with royal liveries. Mr. Bradford instantly recollected his new coach and its well appointed appurtenances; and with the hope of exciting the attention of the illustrious traveller stopped to make inquiries who it was. The carriage, to his inexpressible chagrin, passed on: but one of the servants who followed, civilly informed the invalid that it was the Duke of York on his journey to Bath for the benefit of the waters.

“ Blessings on him!” cried Mrs. Bradford; “ for he is an honour to the nation!”

“ You see,” interrupted her husband, “ that every body who has understanding, or a proper sense of their own dignity of character, goes to Bath: you also find that princes as well as citizens are subject to infirmities.”

“ Indeed,

"Indeed, my dear, we are better at home," said Mrs. Bradford: "you are but weak and will only expose yourself."

"Who wanted your advice? Keep it for your daughter Martha, Mrs. Bradford," interrupted her husband; "I don't desire to hear it; and since you are so forward in giving counsel I have a great mind to go to Bath after all, merely because I will not submit to be governed by your opinion. The first people in the land follow their own inclination, and why should not I? John, turn back towards Hounslow." Thither they went, and there I leave them.

C H A P. III.

By the time that they stopped, Mr. Bradford's gout became so painful, that all thoughts of proceeding on their journey that day were laid aside. On their arrival at the inn, dinner was ordered, while the young travellers set out to walk on the heath; and Mrs. Bradford sat down to a game at cribbage with the invalid.

"Try, for once, if you can amuse me," said Mr. Bradford. "I am sure I have been plagued enough to-day with your caprices and ill-humours. A man had better be hanged than married; for in both cases he has a string of misfortunes."

"You are never *satisfied*!"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Bradford, I have had *enough* of wedlock," retorted her husband.

husband. While they were quarrelling over their cribbage-board, another kind of scene was acting on the heath: Julia and her sister had not strolled an hundred yards when they were overtaken by a fashionable youth in a curricule with four horses; he was handsome, and displayed an air of distinction both by his dress and conduct: for he looked like any thing but a man: and he drove like nothing but a maniac.—After staring the fair pedestrians into confusion, he stopped near the foot-path, and inquired whither they were going.

“Pursue your way, sir,” said Martha, gravely.

“This is my way, nothing like it,” said the baronet. “I am going to lady Pen Pryer’s; the dowager waits dinner; but if you have a mind for a frolic, here is room enough for us all.”

“Pray

"Pray give yourself no trouble on our account," said Julia, blushing and turning from him.

"Trouble ! that's well enough ! no, no, trouble is out of our vocabulary : we men of rank seek nothing but amusement. So come along ; lady Pen will be glad to see you, I dare swear ; and if she sulks and looks stiff, why we'll take leave of the dowager and be off, that's all.—I'm for sport,—catch me who can ! nothing like it."

"Do you mean to insult us ?" said Julia.

"By Jupiter I mean nothing ; nobody can accuse me of such a thing.—I have been upon town ever since I was fourteen ; and I know how to enjoy life as well as any man."

"You seem strangely ignorant"—

"Ignorant !" interrupted sir Lionel, looking earnestly in Martha's face :

"who

“who the devil wants to be wife? I have all the pleasures of life without giving myself any trouble; and what should a man of fashion learn but to amuse himself.”

A servant at this moment overtook the young truants, to inform them that dinner was nearly ready. Sir Lionel wishing them much sport, ascended his curricule and drove full speed towards Colnbrook.

“What a strange mortal!” said Martha, smiling.

“What a ridiculous coxcomb!” added Julia. “The woman who could admire such a being must be, indeed, wretched.—Did you observe how he drove his poor horses; I thought I should faint; what an unfeeling savage!”

“It will be fortunate if his horses are the only sufferers he will meet with in his journey through life,” said Martha.

As

As she spoke she looked back just in time to behold the curricie overfet, and the volatile Baronet precipitated to fome diftance. Julia fhrieked and leant upon the fervant's arm, while Martha flew with hafty fteps towards the fcene of calamity.

The baronet was more alarmed than hurt. His nofe had met the ground rather abruptly, and the fine tints of his complexion were deepened by an unfeemly fteam, that flowed from it. Martha inquired eagerly how the baronet felt; offered her handkerchief; ran to the brook by the road fide, and dipped it in the cold fpring, then applied it to his bleeding nofe, and refreshed the almoft finking object of her attentions. Julia flood at a diftance, overwhelmed with terror. For the fight of blood would have been too fevere a trial for her fenfibility.

The baronet no sooner recovered from his alarm than he exclaimed, "Curse the frisky animals ! I cannot dine with the dowager this figure." Then turning to his groom, he added, "Go on to lady Penelope Pryer's, and say, that I have met a lady on the road, whom I have not seen for some time, and that we are gone to dine together at Hounslow. Now, my gay ones," added he, addressing Martha and her sister, "you are in luck ; I am yours for the day :—were shall we amuse ourselves ?"

Julia informed sir Lionel, that her father expected her at Hounslow ; that he was mistaken in the objects of his attention, and that her sister's affected humanity was always involving her in difficulties. They proceeded towards the inn, and the baronet walked beside them.

On entering the town a chaise passed with a female of fashion. Sir Lionel hailed it. The post-boys stopped. It was lady Pen Pryer; and the baronet was speedily borne off in triumph.

Before the chapter closes, the reader shall have a brief outline of the character last introduced. Sir Lionel Beacon was born to the inheritance of a splendid fortune; but having been an only son, and his father dying while he was an infant, he had been left wholly to the care of his mother—a woman of contracted mental acquirements, though of inordinate personal vanity. Lionel, even from his infancy, presented a model of symmetry and feature scarcely to be equalled. He also possessed a liberal, open, and generous heart; but he was thoughtless, dissipated, wild, and devoted to pleasure. He was resolved to *live all his days*, and therefore he determined

mined not to protract them beyond that period when health, youth, and a fervid flow of spirits should enable him to fulfil his purpose. Such is the personage who will make a conspicuous figure in the following pages.

CHAP. IV.

MR. Bradford had dined and was wrapped in the arms of Morpheus; and Mrs. Bradford was twisting her thumbs before the fire, when the sisters entered the inn. They stole unto another apartment, ate a short dinner, and were talking of their morning adventure, when they heard a shriek in the room where they had left their father. The good man had fallen into a fit of apoplexy, and his wife concluding that he was dead, vociferated loudly for assistance. Julia, on seeing the situation of her father, sunk upon the carpet: while Martha, more judicious in her feelings, loosened his neck-cloth, opened his waistcoat, rubbed his temples, and bathed his face with volatile spirit.

The

The invalid did not recover for some time, and as soon as he found the use of his tongue he inquired who had made him in such a confounded pickle. "I warrant that busy jade Patty!" exclaimed Mr. Bradford. Julia hung about her father in tears, and was honoured with his thanks and his caresses. Little more passed that day, and early on the next morning they set forward on their journey.

To a rational traveller the day would have appeared fine, clear, and bracing: But Mr. Bradford thought it cold and comfortless. He sat in the corner of his emblazoned vehicle wrapped in fur and fleecy hosiery, growling and shivering; while the peasant passed by, whistling and glowing with health and exercise. "Confound luxury!" exclaimed Mr. Bradford; "it only puts one out of humour with the whole world.

world. Why is that poor vagabond more happy than myself?"

"Because he is satisfied, sir," said Martha; "the poor have little to trouble them, except the provision for their day's subsistence."

"A little is sufficient for the laborious," said Mr. Bradford.

"How commendable are those who make a virtue of necessity," replied Martha. "The laborious live scantily, but they are always contented."

"Because they have no feelings," said Julia.

"Or rather feelings of the right sort," interrupted Martha. "For though below luxury, they are above its fascinations."

"I give away many hundreds every year," said Mr. Bradford, "and all the world knows it."

"The

“The merit is therefore diminished,” said Martha.

“The proudest gratification that the heart can experience,” said Julia, “is that of relieving the unfortunate.”

“From the sense of obligations,” again interrupted her sister.

“How can we bestow favours without their being felt?” said Julia.

“By evincing that conscious pleasure which renders the obligation ours,” replied Martha. The coach now ascended a hill, and a lame soldier addressed the travellers. He uncovered his right arm, which had been withered in the service of his country. Julia shuddered, and closed her eyes. Martha threw a shilling into his hat, and Mr. Bradford loudly exclaimed against the insolence of vagrants.”

“He did but beg,” said Martha.

"What else could he do?" cried her father.

"He might have robbed."

"He would have been hanged," added Mr. Bradford.

"Or he would perhaps have starved," said Martha.

"No matter! of what use is a lame soldier?" said Mr. Bradford.

"Of infinite use, if only to remind the wealthy of their obligations," said Martha.

"What do we owe to them?"

"All we possess that is truly valuable — private safety and national honour."

"We pay the vagabonds," said Mr. Bradford.

"You cannot ensure their lives."

"Nor they our property" said the invalid.

"But

"But they defend it, while in return we expose them to peril," said Martha.

"What are their lives in comparison with the wealth of kingdoms?"

"Very little, according to the distributions of fortune," said Martha.

"But the poor wounded foldier, with his rags and mendicity, has still one badge which gold cannot purchase—honour."

"O! that may be bought," said Mr. Bradford.

"Pardon me, fir," replied Martha; "It may be hired; but being lent to every fool, that species of honour is grown so common, it is scarcely worth possessing."

The foldier still walked slowly beside the carriage. Mr. Bradford let down the glass, and asked him if he had no home.

"None but my country, your honour," said he; "and that proves but a comfortless one."

"You are an impostor, I believe, and ought to be sent to jail," cried Mr. Bradford.

"His wound is not fictitious," said Martha.

"Who cares for his wound?" cried Mr. Bradford.

"In truth, but few," replied his daughter; "or it would not be exposed as a stigma on humanity."

"What made him shew it?"

"Necessity, the most pressing of all stimulants," replied Martha.

"The knave is happier than his betters," said Mr. Bradford: "he has every privilege that I possess."

"Sir, you forget that of upbraiding his misfortunes," retorted Martha.

"He

“ He has health and liberty ; as much money as he knows how to use ; and more impudence than he ought to display,” said Mr. Bradford.

“ His health is the effect of temperance ; his liberty the work of his own valour ; his scanty fortune is the source of his effrontery :—for the human mind rises in energy in proportion as it is stung by persecution.” Mr. Bradford fell into a lethargic doze, and a profound silence followed.

At supper, Julia could not eat for thinking of the soldier’s wounded arm ; while he, by the private order of Martha, had been lodged near the inn, and provided with a comfortable meal.

Julia, in the morning, recounted her dreams, and declared they dwelt entirely on the soldier’s distress. Martha had no vision to repeat ; she had passed the night in wakeful rumination ; but the

precarious state of her father's health,
and the oblivion which would more than
darken his tomb, mingled with the re-
membrance of the wounded beggar.

They rose early; and Martha, not
knowing how to employ her time till
breakfast, wrote the following stanzas:

O PITY! if thy holy tear
Immortal decks the wing of Time,
'Tis when the SOLDIER's honour'd bier
Demands the glittering drop sublime!
For who, from busy life remov'd,
Such glorious, dang'rous toil has prov'd,
As HE, who on the embattled plain
Lies, nobly slain!

HE, who forsakes his native shore
To meet the whizzing ball of death;
Who, mid the battle's fateful roar,
Resigns his ling'ring, parting breath;
Who, when the deafening din is done,
So well deserves as Valour's son,
The proud, the lasting wreath of fame,
To grace his name?

Hard

Hard is his fate, the sultry day
To wander o'er the burning plain;
All night to waste the hours away,
Mid howling winds and beating rain,
To talk, O vision sadly sweet!
With her his eyes will never meet,
And find at morn's returning gleam
'Twas but a dream!

To mark the haughty brow severe;
To hear th' imperious, stern command:
To heave the sigh, to drop the tear,
While mem'ry paints his native land.
To know, the laurel he has won
Twines round the brow of FORTUNE's son
While HE, when strength and youth are flown,
Shall die UNKNOWN.

C H A P. V.

MR. BRADFORD made a voluptuous breakfast on cold turkey and madeira. The poor soldier was sitting on the door-bench, with a crust of bread and a small mug of smaller beer. "There's a guzzling vagrant!" said Mr. Bradford: "I knew he wanted for nothing."

"It would be hard that he should," said Martha, "since so scanty a pittance can supply his necessities."

"He likes that sort of living. He would not feel the advantages of luxury."

"Suffer me to make the trial," said Martha, disjointing a wing of the turkey, and filling a bumper of madeira.

"You

“ You would not dare to expose yourself, would you ?” said the invalid. — “ The vagabond is presuming: he follows us, and encroaches on your kindness !”

“ Kindness is to him so rare, that he makes its possession a holiday,” said Martha.

“ Then it should be a fast-day,” said Mr. Bradford.

“ To those he is probably accustomed,” replied Martha; “ therefore this day he shall feast.” So saying, she opened the window, and made the heart bound with gratitude that had long throbbed with unmerited suffering.

The coach being ordered to the indoor, the party again set forward; Mr. Bradford complaining of short breath and a laboured circulation, which abated nothing in its difficulty till they reached the scene of destination.

On

On entering Bath they found a spacious house in the Upper Crescent ready for their reception; and the invalid not being gifted with patience under mortal suffering, immediately dispatched his servant for the best physician. The son of Esculapius arrived. The invalid poured forth his long catalogue of maladies, which was answered briefly in four emphatic words: "You must live temperately."

"And pray, doctor, what do you call temperance?"

"Eating sparingly and of plain diet." Mr. Bradford was silent.

"Going to bed and rising early; avoiding supper, wine, and strong soups." The invalid hemmed.

"Sleeping only as long as Nature demands for refreshment, but never after eating heartily." Mr. Bradford sighed:

"Keeping

“ Keeping your mind easy, your temper placid ; never permitting the trifles of existence to ruffle or disturb you.” The citizen groaned. The physician prescribed, received his fee, and departed.

“ Let me see what I am to have for my guinea,” said Mr. Bradford, reading the prescription. “ Only one line ! Little enough for the money, God knows ! Martha, ring the bell, and send this scrawl to the apothecary’s, and order me a pint of mulled madeira against I wake : I am wondrous sleepy.”

“ Sir, remember the doctor——”

“ D—n the doctor ; I shall follow my own inclinations. I had rather be my own master in Crutched Friars than any doctor’s fool in the universe.” The servant now entered with a bill of fare—turtle-soup, game, poultry, fish : “ An
excellent

excellent catalogue !" said Mr. Bradford.
 " Order me specimens of each."

" Sir, remember the doctor!" repeated Martha.

" What has he to do with my business?" said Mr. Bradford, adding a round oath.

" Sir, he declares that such food is poison."

" And am I not going to swallow his drugs by way of antidote? Do, Mrs. Bradford, order this girl to be quiet."

" Patty, why will you contradict your father?" said her mother.

" My father will kill himself——"

" No matter; you must not contradict him," said Mrs. Bradford.

" Indeed, Patty, your conduct afflicts me," cried Julia. " Pray let our father do what he pleases." Martha sighed as she bowed assent; and while dinner was preparing,

preparing, the invalid indulged in his usual custom of sleeping for an appetite.

In the evening the whole party went to the play. It was the tragedy of Jane Shore, for the benefit of an unknown lady. Mr. Bradford snored through the five acts, Julia wept incessantly, and Martha, as the curtain dropped, stole out of the box to dispatch a short note she had written with a pencil during the performance. In the lobby she found a messenger, to whom she gave it, requesting him, at the same time, to inform the person for whom it was intended, that a letter would be left, with farther communication, at the library in the Orange-Grove on the following morning.

As she spoke, an observer looked earnestly in her face. The inquiry which she had made, and of which the reader will know more hereafter, convinced

vinced him of her future intentions. He followed her to the box, and taking his seat on the last bench, never ceased gazing at her during the remainder of the evening. Julia was exhausted with weeping. The scenes of Shore's progressive sufferings were too affecting for her sensibility. But Martha, whose feelings were of a very different species, enjoyed the cheerful hour which followed, and smiled and even laughed repeatedly. "Unfeeling girl!" exclaimed Julia. The box observer shook his head. The play being ended, they returned home to supper; and at two in the morning Mr. Bradford was carried to his chamber with his usual quantum of two bottles of madeira, and his cooling draught from the repository of Galen.

As Mrs. Bradford was rolling the alderman's limbs in fleecy hosiery, her accus-

accustomed nightly occupation, he informed her that he was determined, since he had travelled so far and at such an expence, to make some figure before he returned to London. "I have," cried he, with an emphatic tone, "hitherto been nobody!"

"True, my love!" said Mrs. Bradford.

"I shall not let the world remain any longer in ignorance: I shall shew mankind that a rich citizen is as great a man as the first lord in the land, and as proud too."

"Many of them are prouder," interrupted Mrs. Bradford.

"Now, my dear wife," said the invalid, "I must caution you not to let down our consequence by forgetting yourself."

"That

"That will be the only way to feel that I have any," replied the simple Mrs. Bradford.

"But above all I charge you not to think of thwarting my opinions. I have never known or felt my value."

"Nor I neither, Mr. Bradford."

"I have always demeaned myself by my own folly, and have been a fool, as one may say."

"Very true, my love!" cried Mrs. Bradford.

"Therefore, my dear wife, we will turn over a new leaf. From this day you must remember that money makes the mare to go."

"My dear, you know you are only alderman," said Mrs. Bradford.

"Gold will buy every thing; and who knows but I may soon die and leave you a title?"

That

"That would be charming, indeed!" said Mrs. Bradford.

"All in good time. But you must not suppose that I will patiently endure being contradicted. I came to Bath to prove my consequence; and if I am to be snapped, and snubbed, and governed like a baby, I shall go back more ridiculous than I came."

"That is impossible, my love," said Mrs. Bradford. "But you are always foreseeing misfortunes; you know that you told me, when you came first to court me, that we were destined to live thirty years together."

"Was that a misfortune, Mrs. Bradford?"

"No, my love: but you added that you should then die, and leave me a disconsolate widow. Though I trust in God that your prediction will not be verified, for I should not be a widow long."

long." Mrs. Bradford's tears interrupted her.

"I believe you, my dear—I believe you, upon my soul!" said the invalid. "I know your disposition too well to suppose such a thing possible. If all women were like you, my love, there would not be a bachelor in existence." As he spoke, Mrs. Bradford, whose attention was absorbed by what she thought her husband's flattering eulogium, pressed his gouty hand in assurance of her gratitude. The pain which her emotion occasioned, by a sympathetic tenderness in both parties, turned the tide of panegyric with almost a magical velocity; while the invalid exclaimed, "Zounds, Mrs. Bradford, you have no more feeling than a stone! A man had better be dead than plagued with such a mortal! I wish I had never married you; you are not capable of nursing a bear!"

"I am sure, my dear, I have had practice enough," replied Mrs. Bradford; "for I have nursed you at least these ten years."

"And you shall nurse me ten more; for I will live to plague you."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Mrs. Bradford, again bursting into a flood of tears, which for that night ended the conversation.

C H A P. VI.

EARLY in the morning Mr. Bradford's servant entered his chamber with a glass of water steaming from the pump. "Sir," said he, opening the curtains hastily, "the doctor says you must drink this the moment you awake."

"But he did not tell you that I must be awakened to drink it."

"He ordered that you should take three glasses."

"He ordered! and pray what right has any man to order me?" said Mr. Bradford. "You know that I will not be commanded; and since the doctor chooses to insist upon the business, you may tell him from me that I will act as I think proper."

"Sir,

"Sir, there is no good in cheating the doctor."

"That's a fine joke, truly!" exclaimed Mr. Bradford. "I gave the doctor one-pound-one; he sends me a dose of hot water that costs him nothing. I should like to know which has most reason to complain of being cheated!"

"You cannot live without his advice, sir."

"Nor can he live without my guinea; so the obligation is mutual."

"But, sir, every body submits——"

"Therefore I am determined to resist," interrupted Mr. Bradford.

"Then, sir, you have no business at Bath."

"Business is out of the question: I came here to forget business, to enjoy life, to shew the world that I have as much money as my neighbours; and

who that can purchase wine will ever think of drinking water?"

"Think of your gout, sir!"

"I came here to forget my gout; for I have thought of it till I fear I shall never get it out of my head again," said Mr. Bradford.

"Indeed, sir, you must obey your physician."

"Why must I? Do you not know that I will not submit to be governed? Have I not convinced all my family, long since, that I am the most obstinate man in the universe?"

"True, sir: but your life is at stake."

"And what is that to you? You will get nothing by my living."

The servant sighed, and Mr. Bradford ordered his usual breakfast of cold meat and madeira.

At

At noon he sallied forth in his rolling-chair. Julia and Martha walked beside him, two servants followed the wheels, while with slow and pompous solemnity they proceeded to the Orange-Grove, where they entered the library.

Martha took up a London newspaper, but Julia never read diurnal prints, because the accounts of casualties were too distressing for her excessive sensibility. The appearance of the groupe excited universal attention, and curiosity was on tiptoe, when the invalid demanded to see the various subscription-books then open for the season. "You may set down Mr. Alderman Bradford in them all," said the invalid; "I suppose money is the thing wanted, and, thank God! I have plenty to give." As he spoke, a lady entered the library. She was veiled, and evidently avoided the inquiring eyes of those

whose attention was attracted by the elegance of her figure. She approached Martha, and thanked her for five guineas which she had that morning received for a benefit ticket. The lady held a handkerchief to her face, and spoke in a low voice. Martha blushed, and stole out of the library. At the door they parted. After taking a turn on the Parade, Martha re-entered the shop, where the first person she saw was the lobby observer, who had the preceding evening watched her so inquisitively. His eyes oppressed her. She endeavoured, but in vain, to avoid them: her confusion only tended to augment his interest; and during several minutes she was the exclusive object of his attention.

The arrival of a new visitor relieved Martha from her embarrassment. The stranger was a female, whose appearance and manners bespoke the altitude of fashion.

fashion. She was not young, but she had once been handsome. She was eager to know whose names were on the Bath list; declared that she had not seen a single mortal since her arrival that looked like any thing human. Then turning suddenly round, gazed stedfastly at the sisters, and inquired, "Who are they? Where do they come from? What are they doing at Bath? I never saw them before! What rank do they hold in society?"

Nobody knew any thing about them. The strange lady fixing her eyes on Julia, continued,

"I like the fair one; she is an elegant girl. I suppose that big man is the father," glancing at Mr. Bradford. "He looks like an alderman that has eaten a turtle, and then crept into the shell. I wonder what could bring such comical people to Bath! I shall
D 4 inquire

inquire at the pump-room who they are: somebody must know them, they are so completely ridiculous." Her attention was now drawn by another object. "Heavens! Morley, where did you come from?" exclaimed she, addressing Martha's lobby observer. "What amusement can a man of your serious turn of mind possible receive among the gay and the dissipated? I always thought you liked melancholy scenes, feasted on the tears of suffering virtue, and breathed responsively to the sighs of sorrowing bosoms!" Mr. Morley bowed slightly, and quitted the library.

"What a pedantic creature!" was the comment that followed. "I would give any thing to know what brought him to Bath! He neither games nor intrigues: he is neither sick nor fanciful. He can have no business here."

"He

"He came to procure a benefit-play for an amiable but unfortunate lady," said an astonished listener.

"How gothic! There must be some unknown reason for such laborious benevolence! Is the woman young or handsome?"

"Both, madam."

"I thought so! Of what species is she?"

"Human," was the laconic answer.

"I mean, of what character?"

"Her distress is the best voucher for her reputation," replied the person addressed.

The lady, silenced by this remark, fauntered towards the pump-room; and the sisters, having selected books for their entertainment, were quitting the shop, when they perceived their hero of the *haut ton*, sir Lionel Beacon.

C H A P. VII.

AFTER looking round, and yawning till he infected the whole circle, he exclaimed, "Bath is a bore!"

"A bore!" repeated Mr. Bradford with astonishment. Sir Lionel continued—

"Nothing but dipping dowagers and splenetic spinsters! Not a soul that a man of fashion knows! I only arrived this morning, and I am tired of it already. No chance of a frolic! Nothing human to be seen, go where one will!" Then looking round, he added, "A book-shop! I'm off! I hate books amazingly. Never read! And if I had the arrangement of things, all the volumes in the kingdom should be burnt,

burnt, excepting the Racing Calendar. Reading only makes men stupid and women insolent. Besides, why should a man of rank ever have the trouble to think, while he can hire poor vagabonds to take that labour off his hands? When I was on my travels I enjoyed life astonishingly. I lived as an Englishman ought. I knew every opera-dancer on the continent, drank the best wine, wore the handsomest coats, supported the most fashionable girls, and was thought the most famous judge of what was pleasant of any Englishman that had ever travelled before me; while my tutor passed his time in hunting antiquities, poring over books, and, whenever he had an opportunity, which scarcely happened once a month, in lecturing me on my prodigality."

As the baronet concluded his soliloquy, he turned towards Julia, who stood

rapt in amazement. "Where shall we go?" said he. "How shall we pass our time till dinner? Cannot you take me home with you? I know nobody!—O! by Jove, here comes a famous fellow! an astonishing good figure!" So saying, he placed Julia's arm within his, and dashed toward the threshold, where Mr. Bradford had halted lest some unlucky movement of the boisterous baronet should dislodge him from his rolling vehicle. Sir Lionel, unappalled by the frowns of the citizen, continued—

"Why, my knight of the fleece! what could induce you to wander so far from home? It was only two days since that I heard of you at Hounslow! What brings you to Bath? You are too wary to gamble, except in the stocks. Pray are you a bull or a bear? I should suppose you too unfashionable
to

to be the former; though, by your shaggy appearance, you have an amazing resemblance of the latter."

"What a fortunate thing it is to be born honourable!" said Mr. Bradford; "it saves so much trouble."

"I wish we could exchange our honour for your gold," replied sir Lionel.

"That would never do," said Mr. Bradford; "we should lose too much by the discount. We speculate on interest in proportion as we possess principal."

"We have interest as well as you," replied sir Lionel: "but as to principle, we care little about it. You toil, we sport; you sow, and we reap the harvest."

"It is well you have an opportunity," retorted Mr. Bradford; "for your high stations are sometimes barren."

"You

“ You are amazingly witty,” said sir Lionel, “ and I shall certainly be better acquainted with you.” The inquisitive lady now passed the door. “ There goes old Pen Pryer ! I must make my bow, and rally her into good-humour. She looks astonishingly sulky, because she caught me making love to the chambermaid at Devizes. I thought to vex the old girl : but she took it in high dudgeon, and left me to pay the reckoning. I won’t say a civil thing to her these six months, and that will make her amazingly miserable.” As he spoke, Lady Pen beckoned him ; while Mr. Bradford, with his family, returned to the Crescent, little pleased with the adventures of the morning.

C H A P. VIII.

AT night they visited the rooms, more dressed and more looked at than any persons in the circle. Mr. Bradford was a tolerable whist-player, and Julia danced like a sylph. Sir Lionel was her partner; not because he liked the trouble of dancing, or the fatigue of saying civil things, but for a more important reason—he excited the jealousy and mortified the vanity of Lady Penelope Pryer.

Mr. Bradford had won two rubbers, when Mr. Morley, in a low whisper, informed him that he was playing with a practised sharper. “And what is that to you?” cried the citizen. “Mind your own affairs, and I warrant I will take

take care of mine." Contradiction, even in the form of friendly counsel, was ever obnoxious to this son of Mammon; for this reason he doubled his stake on the succeeding rubbers, betted largely on the honours, and at three in the morning rose a loser of one thousand guineas. His gouty spasms increased with his ill-fortune; and his mental agony was, on arriving at the Crescent, only to be equalled by his corporeal suffering. Again a servant was dispatched for a physician.

Martha ventured to utter her regrets that interest should be a plea for the destruction of health: but her remonstrances proved unfortunate; for on the following day she was commanded, with her mother, to set out for London. "Julia shall stay with me," said Mr. Bradford; "she neither advises nor contradicts me." They departed.

Martha

Martha was quitting Bath, when the chaise was stopped by Mr. Morley, who presented her a letter, and immediately departed. She broke the seal, and read the contents aloud to her mother. They were as follows :

‘ You appear to be sensible, humane,
 ‘ and amiable: I possess an independent
 ‘ fortune, and am a bachelor. I offer
 ‘ you my heart, because I think you
 ‘ worthy of possessing it. I have made
 ‘ inquiries respecting your sudden de-
 ‘ parture, and in a few hours after your
 ‘ arrival in London I shall call at your
 ‘ house for an answer. I want no for-
 ‘ tune with you ; I only wish you to be
 ‘ the partner of mine. Decide speedily
 ‘ and candidly.’

Mr. Morley kept his word, and on the evening of their return to Crutched
 Friars

Friars made them a visit. His conduct was liberal and sincere, his language frank and affectionate, his family and character unexceptionable, his person manly and pleasing. Martha requested three days to consider the question, and at the termination of that period Mr. Morley obtained her leave to write to Bath for the consent of her father.

Reader, Martha was not in haste for an husband : but she, like her father, was weary of perpetual contradiction. The evident partiality which had been shewn to her sister made her sigh for similar attentions. There is no pang equal to the throbbing of an unattached heart ; for without an object to interest and to please, life is but a dream of visionary enjoyment. Yet Martha was not one of those romantic females who are led from the paths of rationality by the phantoms of vanity and caprice : she
knew

knew that love, which is not founded in esteem, cannot be of long duration. The reader may draw his opinion of her sentiments from her own pen, in the following stanzas:

LOVE said to REASON, "Know my pow'r,
Nor vaunt thy pedant rules;
I can the sweetest natures sour,
And makes the wisest fools!"

"I bid Philosophy submit,
I make the dullest gay;
To idiots lend a gleam of wit,
And darken wisdom's ray.

"I can teach proud and freezing scorn
To feel my potent skill;
The sternest face with smiles adorn,
The cold with rapture fill."

"'Tis true," indignant REASON said,
"Too much of pow'r's thy own;
Yet 'tis where I refuse my aid,
And only THOU art known.

"But

"But Time, that conquers e'en thy art,
Bids REASON's altar burn;
And as he calms the feverish heart,
I triumph in my turn."

CHAP. IX.

WHILE Martha was preparing what hope represented as a path of roses, Julia was by her gentle acquiescence hurrying her father towards the margin of the grave. Never contradicted, he indulged in every luxury, ate immoderately, played deeply, fretted incessantly, drank inordinately, and slept three times during the twenty-four hours. His malady increased, his form became every hour more corpulent; his temper more irritable; his pocket more light; and his expences more heavy. Julia had formed many fashionable acquaintances, for she knew the art of being all things to all people; among others she
was

was honoured with the particular attentions of lady Pen Pryer: not because Julia had accomplishments and beauty; but because she was almost perpetually followed by sir Lionel Beacon: and lady Pen wisely thought the surest method of knowing what passed, was that of never losing sight of the objects who awakened her curiosity.

Sir Lionel imperceptibly became a favourite with Mr. Bradford. He was pleasant, lively, and good humoured: he would drink with him, and bet with him; for the baronet was an adept in making himself at home in all societies. Besides, Julia thought him entertaining and amiable; and Julia's opinion was omnipotent, because it never opposed that of her father. Mr. Bradford already anticipated the honour of calling his daughter "my lady," while the baronet

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only

only looked forwards to the plain and more common appellation of *mistress*.

Mr. Morley having obtained the father's consent, found little difficulty in adding to it the fair hand of Martha. They were married with decent privacy—they did not publish to the world by pomp and idle parade, that their affections were brought to a climax. From the church they set out for Derbyshire, where Mr. Morley, possessing a clear estate of four thousand pounds per annum, with a comfortable and spacious family mansion, was considered as a man of unblemished reputation.

Mr. Morley, with some good qualities, had also some peculiarities. He was rigidly tenacious of an husband's authority; extremely correct in religious duties; a jealous admirer of subordination; and a most decided enemy to every thing that could possibly degrade
the

the dignity of his ancestry: for Mr. Morley, in the female line, had descended from nobility; and though by his indefatigable labour to obtain the character of a philanthropist and a christian he had exalted his name, he would have felt no repugnance in knowing that it was also embellished by a title.

Morley House was pleasantly situated on the skirts of a valley; overshadowed by a mountain, and at half a mile's distance from a village, whose thinly scattered cottages were the abodes of poverty and labour. Mr. Morley seldom roved beyond the boundaries of his own manor; and though he evinced his benevolence twice a year by public donations, he seldom met his indigent neighbours, excepting at church, where his devout and unremitting attention to
sacred

sacred doctrines rendered him an example worthy of imitation.

Mr. Morley was one of those prejudiced mortals who consider women as beings created for the conveniences of domestic life. He married because his manor house was lonely; and he chose a girl of Martha's open and ingenuous temper, because he imagined that he might govern her with facility; believing that the sense of obligations for her removal from parental tyranny, would render her passive when he asserted the authority of an husband.

A few months after their arrival in Derbyshire Mr. Morley was called to a distant part of England, to transact business of an important nature. One morning, during his absence, Martha, to whom constraint had give a zest for roving, resolved on visiting the neighbouring hamlet, to explore the habita-

tions of the poor and the laborious. She had strolled farther than she intended, when on passing a small thatched cottage at the end of the village, she heard a deep groan, which arrested her footsteps. She listened; it was repeated. She knocked at the door, but no one answered: she tried the latch, opened it, and entered.

She found a female, young and pretty, with an infant lying beside her, on a poor pallet, and with every appearance of poverty and pain. Mrs. Morley approached the bed: the child was only a few hours old. The mother placing her hands before her eyes, would have concealed her tears, but they rolled down her pale cheek involuntarily. The scene was penetrating, and Martha's heart was tender. A tattered curtain, which was fastened before the casement, rendered the apartment gloomy. Mrs.
Morley

Morley took the infant in her arms towards the door; it was asleep and tranquil. Over a chair which stood near the threshold was thrown a muslin morning dress:—the fashion of it struck Mrs. Morley's eyes, and, from that single circumstance, she concluded that the mother of the new-born villager was more than what her miseries bespoke her. The child was again placed in its mother's arms. It already seemed to enjoy the warmth of a maternal bosom. She sighed as she pressed it still closer to her heart; and with a feeble voice entreated Mrs. Morley to leave her.

Martha kneeling by the side of the bed, took the sufferer's hand, which was white and beautiful, while with tenderness and sympathy she inquired why she uttered such piercing tones. "Have you no medical aid? Do you want the

comforts necessary to your situation?" said she.

"Alas! earthly consolation has long been an alien to my heart?" sighed the young woman. "But we cannot quit this state of suffering when we grow weary of its trials."

"It will be hard indeed if, at your time of life, the world becomes a tedious scene. You are scarcely authorized in wishing for death, while you have the powers of rendering life supportable to yourself or beneficial to others."

"Yours is the language of religious resignation," replied the young woman; "but despair will sometimes vanquish even that last resource. I am too wretched to reason on the chimeras of hope,—they have so long deceived me." She could not proceed—tears which evidently flowed from a full heart suppressed the powers of utterance. Mrs.
Morley

Morley caught the contagious sorrow, and in silent sympathy presented such relief as she thought necessary for the stranger's present situation. It was modestly rejected.

"Will you endeavour to be more tranquil?" said Mrs. Morley. The sufferer sighed and shook her head impressively.

"What can I do to serve you?" inquired Martha. "I cannot leave you so distressed in mind without some hope of rendering you more happy."

"Advise me how to conceal my infant."

"To conceal it!" repeated Mrs. Morley, with an emotion of surprize.

"Why should it be concealed?"

"Because I am not what my miseries bespeak me. Born to expect an happier destiny, my proud heart withers in concealment of those wrongs, which a

less delicately organized mind would quickly find redressed."—Mrs. Morley's bosom shuddered.

"But," added the young woman, "thank Heaven! I still can live by mental exertion."

"There is no harder labour," interrupted Mrs. Morley with a sigh. "Yet little do the dull and proud imagine how dearly the children of genius earn even the highest patronage which ostentation offers. The toils of intellect are more severe than even the miseries of adversity."

"Having borne the pressure of conscious reproof, I shall not sink beneath the most laudable and honourable of occupations; my fortitude will be invincible."

"And yet I heard you groaning deeply."

"It

"It was for my sleeping infant," replied the unknown, "the innocent object who is unconscious of its fate. A stranger, setting out on a journey through an unfeeling world,—exposed to poverty,—unprotected, unacknowledged,—the offspring of a mysterious destiny—" She paused a few moments, then with an agonized tone exclaimed, "O God! there is no rest for feeling bosoms, but in the grave!"

Mrs. Morley took the child in her arms and kissed it.—"Ah! madam," continued its mother, "the noblest blood circulates in the beating heart of that sweet infant. But it is born to sorrow."

"And could you part with it?" said Mrs. Morley, taking its dimpled hand, and pressing it to her lips. "Could you bear to leave the little innocent——?"

“ I cannot bear to witness the sorrow which I shall heap upon it. Better were it that the child should never know its mother, than know her to reproach her.” She spoke feebly and seemed near fainting.

“ You exhaust your strength; compose your mind, I conjure you,” said Mrs. Morley; “ and I will see you again to-morrow. Have you no attendant?”

“ Yes, a good old woman. She is gone to the other end of the village to fetch me some nourishment. She will soon return. Pray, oh! pray, do not expose my situation. I can bear any thing but public shame——.”

“ To-morrow I will see you again.” said Mrs. Morley, proceeding towards the door where she met the old woman:—they passed each other, but not a word was uttered.—

Mrs. Morley on her return home ruminated on the situation of the young unknown. The rain began to pour, and she was ill prepared to resist it. On her arrival at the manor-house she employed the housekeeper in selecting a variety of articles for the comfort and subsistence of the sufferer; and without attending to her own safety again immediately set out with a basket of provisions for the cottage. She did not mention the situation of the object who excited her interest; because secrecy was the delight of her charitable propensities.

She found the mother and her infant sleeping. The balm of sympathy was the opiate which lulled the aching heart; and the idea of being noticed by one feeling mortal, seemed to compensate for the whole world's unkindness. She had not slept soundly during many

months; — she had longed, ardently longed, for sleep eternal ! Mrs. Morley did not wake her ; but placing the basket on a chair near her bed, stole away unheard and unseen by all, excepting the recording eye of an Omniscient approver !

CHAP. X.

THE rain which had penetrated Mrs. Morley's dress, though her heart was warm, chilled its circulation. She was on the following day seized with feverish shiverings, and confined to her bed. Her only anxiety was for the young mother's safety, and her only ruminations were those of devising means to obtain intelligence how she had passed the night. During the day she received a letter from Mr. Morley, informing her that new business of the utmost importance, no less than the death of an uncle, who had left him a large addition to his fortune, obliged him to set off without delay for Brussels. He request-

ed that she would reconcile her mind to the separation which would not be of many weeks, and that she would not fail to write by every opportunity. Mrs. Morley's union with her husband owed its source to sentiment more than to passion; she could therefore exist out of his presence. She felt the value of fortune by the indulgence of her benignant propensities, and the augmentation of those powers reconciled her to the absence of her husband.

Her fever increased, and during several days she was confined to her bed. At the end of a week she sent for her old housekeeper, who had lived many years in the family, and desired her to take a fresh basket of provisions, some linen, and a letter to the last cottage in the village. "Leave them, but say nothing," cried Mrs. Morley, "if you love me, or value my friendship."

Mrs.

Mrs. Grimwood obeyed as far as the first part of her commission went: but to *say nothing* was too severe an injunction. She made more than ordinary haste, because she was on the wing of curiosity. On approaching the door she entered abruptly, where she saw the old nurse with the infant on her knee. The mother had removed to an inner chamber.

Mrs. Grimwood stood silent and meditating. The child was dressed in fine muslin and lace, the emblems of a fond mother's harmless vanity.

"Whose child is this?" said Mrs. Grimwood.

"A lady's," answered the nurse.

"What lady's?"

"I am not permitted to tell."

"Why?"

"Because I do not know."

"Where

"Where is the mother?"

"Not far off," said the nurse.

"I believe you," cried Mrs. Grimwood, "I believe you; though he who ought to be the father is at some distance."

"Alack!" was the sighed reply. The sagacious housekeeper pondered.

"Well, here is provision, both of food and raiment: but it is the last that I will bring," said Mrs. Grimwood. She threw the basket on the ground, glanced at the unoffending object of suspicion, and with majestic precision measured back her steps towards home.

The old nurse brought daily intelligence from the cottage; and at the end of a fortnight Mrs. Morley was well enough to make another visit to the invalid. She found her considerably recovered; and the question

was

was again started, "How shall I conceal my infant?" It was a fine girl; and many a noble parent would have been glad to have owned it: but the want of a few words from a priest had condemned it to shame and to oblivion.

Mrs. Morley played with the infant, and it smiled. She wished it were her own, and at the same moment it pressed her finger with its little hand. "I shall be sorry to part with the pretty creature," said she. The child seemed to look with an imploring eye. Mrs. Morley, bursting into tears, kissed and caressed it. At this moment Mrs. Grimwood passed the cottage door. It was open; so were her eyes. The infant was satisfied; so was Mrs. Grimwood.

"Will you trust the child with me for a few hours?" said Mrs. Morley.

"Most

"Most willingly," replied the mother.

"Our housekeeper is a good sort of woman, and she may assist us in finding an asylum for the pretty angel." The mother sighed deeply, but said nothing.

The child was carefully wrapped in a flannel mantle, and Mrs. Morley tripped lightly with her charge along the village; little foreseeing that her steps would lead to a labyrinth of adventures.

C H A P. XI.

THE evening sun shed its last beams on the no less ruddy cheek of the infant stranger, when Mrs. Morley was returning with it towards the cottage. She had loitered till it was near twilight in shewing her little treasure to the whole family, and the event furnished many themes for conjecture and suspicion. Mrs. Morley's lonely rambles, her recent confinement, her husband's absence, the provisions and the clothes sent to the cottage, the old nurse's ambiguous answers to Mrs. Grimwood's questions, and the fine dress of the infant, were subjects of mysterious and ambiguous animadversion.

On

On Mrs. Morley's return to the birth-place of the fugitive she found the doors shut and the windows closed. The inhabitants had departed. Her amazement and chagrin were not to be described. She stood mute and wonder-struck. She removed the flannel from the infant's face : it was sleeping sweetly. A dimpled smile played round its mouth : its hands were placed upon its breast. The soft breath ascended fragrantly to her lip as she kissed its cheek. It had the aspect of a cherub. It was deserted—by whom ? By its mother ! The offspring of frailty ! the heir to shame ! the friendless, helpless, guiltless child, probably, of an illicit passion !

“ These are the fatal effects of barbarous and prejudiced opinions !” said Mrs. Morley. “ This innocent creature is left to the mercy of a stranger, because
cause

cause its parents have erred against the laws of moral rectitude ! It is left even without a name ! A female, thrown upon an unfeeling world, abandoned by the bosom which Nature has stored with nourishment to save it !” She could not proceed : she wept abundantly ; and the infant was once more conveyed to Morley-house, as a full confirmation of all that had been shrewdly conjectured.

C H A P. XII.

WHILE Mrs. Morley was occupied in the offices of philanthropy, her sister Julia was employed in the senseless pursuits of modern dissipation. Lady Pen Pryer was still her constant companion, and the volatile baronet their divided inamorato; while Mr. Bradford hourly augmented his store of complaints in proportion as he diminished the sources of his enjoyment.

The season for drinking the Bath waters being over, lady Pen proposed a trip to Weymouth. "All the world will be there," said she; "and it will be ten to one that Julia returns at least with a title." Mr. Bradford's ear caught the flattering sound; Julia heaved a languishing sigh, and sir Lionel requested permission to be of their party.

On

On a burning summer morning the four black steeds were again put in motion; lady Pen and sir Lionel leading the way in the baronet's curricule, and the wealthy invalid anticipating the renovation of health from the salubrious effects of aquatic breezes.

Julia had considerably improved under the auspices of a woman of fashion. She now *rouged* highly, talked boldly, gazed stedfastly, laughed sarcastically, and sighed significantly. Her dress was less after the vestal *costume*: she knew how to fold her drapery after the manner of a Grecian Venus or a Roman Mesalina: she could smile like Laïs, and make love like Sappho: she was the perpetual retailer of anecdote for the amusement of lady Pen; and she professed an abhorrence of every thing serious or literary, in compliment to the taste of the dissipated baronet.

Mr.

Mr. Bradford's relish for the good things of this world was not diminished by his intercourse with the bad ones. He could swallow the most insipid flattery as well as the most savoury viands. He drank the intoxicating streams of the grape with a new set of noble associates, till they produced the same effect on his mind as the waters of Lethe. The world was to him newly created. He for the first time knew how to live, at the moment when reflection should have taught him how to die. But the rankest weeds are those of oldest growth. Mr. Bradford had long panted for the society of nobility as he had panted for breath, and both equally promised his approaching destruction.

A few weeks put a period to his enjoyments. Death judiciously made a full stop ; for the citizen expired immediately after eating a voracious dinner
given

given by sir Lionel on the birth-day of Julia. The consternation which this sudden event occasioned is not to be described. Lady Pen wrote an extempore epigram on the catastrophe; and Julia fainting in the arms of sir Lionel, was conveyed senseless from the scene of calamity.

Reader, lament not the death of Peregrine Bradford, but lend your ready tears to the tide of Julia's sorrows. Sir Lionel for a moment forgot his lovely lady Pen, and Julia, from the day of her birth, will ever remember sir Lionel.

In twelve hours after the death of Mr. Bradford, the corpse set out for London. The baronet had a horse to run at York, and also took his departure, accompanied by lady Pen Pryer, who was not acquainted with all that had passed during her poetical reverie. Julia's consternation was only to be equalled by her grief: she had lost her
her

her dear, her indulgent father ; she had also lost both her peace of mind and honour. The four black steeds conveyed her back to London in every sense of the word a modern girl of fashion.

Mrs. Bradford was not wholly inconsolable. She did all that a wife is expected to do on similar occasions—she wore weeds, placed an armorial lozenge over the door, thereby kindly informing the public that a rich widow was to be disposed of to the highest bidder ; and after weeping the usual and decent time, she set out, with her disconsolate Julia, on a visit to Mrs. Morley in Derbyshire.

In all the towns through which they passed Julia distributed small money to the poor who flocked round the carriage. The rich widow Bradford disdained, like some of our nobility, to travel unknown : she did not fly through towns and villages without a single blessing
from

from the poor and the unhappy. She knew the value of wealth, by making a little benevolence go a great way in the scale of popularity; and she considered a name as of some use besides embellishing the pages of an emblazoned calendar. Twenty pounds, bestowed in the purchase of pious ejaculations, rendered Mrs. Bradford of more importance in her journey to Derbyshire than as many thousands have made as many nobles during the expensive travels of their minority. So cheap is a good name; and yet how few will take the pains to become purchasers!

On their approaching Morley-house they found its mistress walking on the lawn, with the little fugitive in her arms. It had been made a Christian, and its name was Frances. Mrs. Morley hastened to meet her relations, and led them into the parlour followed by

Mrs. Grimwood, to whose care she had consigned the infant. After the usual ceremonies of friendly meeting—

“Dear, Martha, whose child is this?” cried Julia, looking earnestly at Frances.

“Is it not extremely pretty?” inquired Mrs. Morley.

“It is very like you,” said Julia. Mrs. Grimwood’s mouth was curved at the corner while she looked vacantly towards the window.

“Pray tell me who are its parents?” continued Julia.

“That nobody knows,” replied Mrs. Grimwood officiously, at the same time elevating her eye-brows, and half smiling.

Mrs. Bradford now took the child in her arms. “Well!” exclaimed she, “I protest I have seen somebody as like this baby as two peas!”

“It

"It has Martha's mouth," added Julia.

"I am sure it has my mistress's nose," cried Mrs. Grimwood.

"There is something like Patty about the chin," said Mrs. Bradford; "and if she had been married long enough, I should have sworn it was my grandchild.—What think you, my good woman?"

Mrs. Grimwood sighed, but said nothing.

C H A P. XIII.

FRANCES, who had been placed at nurse in a neighbouring farm-house, grew daily in strength as she increased in beauty. Mrs. Morley frequently visited the fugitive, but heard nothing from its mother. Mr. Morley, at the expiration of four months, returned; and Morley-house presented a scene of the most promising domestic happiness.

Julia dedicated all her hours to elegant acquirements. She drew with taste and skill; she sang correctly and pleasingly; she had made a considerable progress in the polite languages; and her memory being retentive, she could

could repeat most of the best passages in the English poets. Her mind was tinged with romantic propensities, which appeared, at times, more extraordinary than natural; while her person improved in delicacy, and her temper seemed soft even to the excess of sensibility.

On the Sunday after Mr. Morley's return, Julia and Mrs. Bradford attended him to church. Mrs. Morley had strolled out immediately after breakfast, and did not come back till near the hour of dinner. She had been to visit her little *élève*, who was sickening for the measles. Mr. Morley, on seeing her, remarked that he was astonished at her forgetting the duties of religion, when so fashionable a girl as her sister thought them worthy of attention.

"Perhaps Martha has been to see her little favourite," said Julia: "it seems to engross all her affections."

"What favourite?" inquired Mr. Morley hastily.

Julia reddened. "I hope I have not said any thing which I ought not to have uttered!" cried she, hesitating. "I thought you knew, of course, that my sister had a little *protégée*!"

"What does it mean?" said Mr. Morley: "To whom does Julia allude?"

Mrs. Morley was addressed so abruptly, that she knew not what answer to make: but after some confused and faltering attempts to speak, she replied, "She means my little girl, at farmer Oldham's."

"*Your* little girl!" cried Mr. Morley.

"My

"My little adopted——" added Martha, again hesitating.

"You might have requested my permission before you adopted any *protégée*," said Mr. Morley. "An husband's acquiescence is, I think, necessary on occasions of such importance."

"It is a poor little helpless, forsaken creature," said Mrs. Morley; "and were you to see it, you would not, you could not blame me."

"Indeed," added Julia, "you would love the infant; it is so astonishingly like my sister."

"I wish it were my own!" sighed Mrs. Morley.—Mr. Morley's face reddened.

"You could not idolize it more," said Julia; "for it seems the pride and pleasure of your existence. You are devoted to it, almost exclusively."

"Indeed!" muttered Mr. Morley.
 "And pray where did you find this fascinating object?" Martha was preparing a reply, when Mrs. Grimwood entered the parlour to say that Frances was in convulsions, and that the wife of farmer Oldham was come to tell her mistress she feared that she was dying. Mrs. Morley rose from table, and darted out of the room; while her astonished husband and Julia gazed earnestly at each other.

"What means all this?" inquired Mr. Morley.—Mrs. Grimwood replied, "Indeed, sir, nobody knows what it means."

"Do not judge hastily," said Julia, addressing Mr. Morley. "You know my sister has been ill, and perhaps she will not bear interrogation. The poor baby cannot help it."

"Help

"Help what?" cried Mr. Morley, with evident inquietude.

"You are so hasty!" said Mrs. Bradford. "I dare say that Martha will acquit herself."

"Who has accused her?" inquired the husband.

"Not I," said Julia. "Heaven knows I believe the story, even with all its improbabilities!"

"What story? You will make me seriously uneasy," said Mr. Morley.

"Nay, ask Martha," replied Julia; "I do not choose to meddle with such an ambiguous matter. The infant is really a sweet creature, and evidently of no mean extraction. Perhaps my sister loves it for its strong resemblance to herself."

"Who is its father?" said Mr. Morley.

"That she never mentions."

"Its mother?"

"She will not tell."

"By heavens, this has more meaning than discretion!" said Mr. Morley. "I will see the infant."

He hastened to farmer Oldham's; he saw the infant. It was on Martha's bosom, bathed with her tears. Mr. Morley desired his wife to return with him.

"Not while my little darling is in this precarious state," said she. "I am not destitute of feeling!"

"Nor am I of discernment," interrupted Mr. Morley. "I *command* you to obey me!" Martha had never heard such words spoken with such an emphasis. Her colour came and went, she looked a refusal, and hugged the child still closer to her bosom.

"It is some beggar's offspring," said Mr. Morley. "Some artful, low-born
jade

jade has imposed on your mistaken sensibility."

"That it is a beggar renders it more dear to me," replied Mrs. Morley.

"There are times and places for all things."

"Blest was the time, though sad the dwelling, where I found poor Frances," said Mrs. Morley, bursting into tears. As she spoke, Mrs. Bradford and Julia entered the room.

"Heavens! Martha, why are you in tears?" said Julia, taking her hand, and at the same time glancing at the infant.

"My poor little Frances!" said Mrs. Morley, when her words were arrested by her distress.

Julia looked a tacit reproof. "You are wrong, indeed," cried she, in an audible whisper. "Were the child

your own, you could not feel more afflicted."

"Perhaps I should feel less," replied Mrs. Morley; "for in that case the little darling would not be deemed an object of charity. It is its helpless, its unacknowledged state that makes me sympathize in its sufferings."

Mr. Morley again desired his wife to return home. "Do not refuse," said Julia: "remember that it is your husband who commands, and I conjure you to obey."

Martha gave the child to Mrs. Oldham, and attended her family.

The evening at Morley-house was neither social nor happy. Mr. Morley was more than thoughtful: his wife little less than despairing for the fate of Fanny. Mrs. Bradford said nothing: but Julia looked an infinity of things. She lamented

mented that her sister did not seem so happy as she expected to find her ; and hoped that when she married, she should be able to assimilate her ideas with those of her husband. There could be no domestic harmony where hearts did not beat in unison. Sympathy, she continued, was the soul of sentiment ; and it was the duty of every wife to consider her husband's will as the foundation of her felicity.

" Then women, from the moment that they marry, do not submit to personal captivity only ?" said Martha.

" Marriage, in that case, is little better than slavery. I detest the thought of enforced subordination !" Mr. Morley rose from his seat and walked about the room.

" You were not at church, Martha !" said he, with a tone of ill-humour.

I

" I was

"I was quite as well employed," replied Mrs. Morley.—Julia shook her head. Her husband again addressed her.

"Religious duties should never be neglected. The most exalted situation is embellished by the exercise of piety."

"And the most wretched solaced by the affiduities of benevolence."

"Another day might have been devoted to your purpose," said Mr. Morley.

"And have risen to shew me the corpse of Fanny!" replied Martha.

"You might have sent the child every aid; you had no occasion to disgrace yourself by personal attendance. Familiarity is the source of humiliation."

"I ac-

"I acknowledge no distinction but that which originates in virtue," Mr. Morley grew uneasy.

"When I married you, Martha, I did not suppose that those were your opinions."

"If it was your intention to present me a new set, my dear Mr. Morley, it was of little importance what were the old ones."

"Pray, Martha, do not speak so decidedly to your husband," said Julia. "Remember how often you used to vex our good father by contradicting him!"

"Your father was a peevish, vulgar man," cried Mr. Morley. "I pitied your sister, and therefore married her——"

"That all the world may follow your *example*," said Mrs. Morley.

"I released you from parental authority——"

"To

"To teach me that of an husband."

Julia observed the increasing altercation, and in tears quitted the room. What passed on the following morning the reader shall know in the next chapter.

CHAP. XIV.

MR. Morley rose early, and summoned Mrs. Grimwood to the breakfast-room. "Grimwood," said he, "you have been a faithful servant in the family during many years. You have always proved yourself diligent and honest. I have no reason to suppose that you would utter a falsehood—and I therefore question you with confidence. How long is it since my wife first took this infant under her protection?"

"Just about the time that my mistress was ill, and confined to her bed."

"Ill! and confined to her bed! when—? I never heard that she had been ill; what was her malady?" inquired Mr. Morley.

"I do

"I do not know, sir."

"Whom did she see? who attended her?"

"She saw nobody but an old woman, who lived a short time in the village," replied Mrs. Grimwood, with some hesitation.

"Find her!—produce her!" cried Mr. Morley rapidly:—"There is some mystery in this strange adoption.—What think you of this child?" continued he, after a short pause.

"I think it very like my mistress, sir."

"She loves it excessively," said Mr. Morley.

"As if it were her own," rejoined Mrs. Grimwood.

"How did my wife pass her time during my absence?"

"In

"In rambling about near the manor-house," replied the housekeeper.

"Did she go to church?"

"Not often.—She used to visit all the little cottages, and talk as familiarly with the poor people in them, as though they had been her equals."

"She is very condescending!" interrupted Mr. Morley, peevishly.

"O very, sir. She has no pride."

"Not an atom!" said he, biting his lip.

"She is not at all like miss Julia."

"As unlike as day and night," replied Mr. Morley. "But hasten to the village, and find the old convenient jade who was the keeper of my wife's confidence. We will hear what account she gives of the infant."

Mrs. Grimwood set out on her important embassy. Crossing the meadows she overtook Mrs. Morley, who was going to inquire how Fanny had
passed

passed the night. — They parted at farmer Oldham's, after the following brief conversation :

“ Heaven grant that I may find my little darling living. — I feel that I love the poor innocent, in proportion as it is persecuted.”

“ My master seems very much displeased at your attentions. — He thinks that you demean yourself by taking notice of a child whom nobody knows — and who ought to be sent to the parish.”

“ I would rather toil to support it,” said Mrs. Morley. Mrs. Grimwood made no comments ; she was too busily employed in making conjectures. She hastened to the village, and her inquiries proved nearly fruitless. For all she learnt was, that the old woman was a Welsh midwife, and only a few weeks resident at the cottage.

She

She returned towards home. Mr. Morley met her more than half way. She made her report; and he made up his mind, that his wife was the mother of little Fanny.

A few days after this event a letter arrived at Morley-house. It came from lady Pen Pryer, informing the family that she should, on her way to Buxton, make them a visit. Lady Pen was volatile and dissipated; but she was a woman of rank, and Mr. Morley felt infinite delight in associating with people of distinction.

Mrs. Morley's opinions were in this instance also different from those of her husband: she expressed some discontent at the visit proposed; and wished lady Pen had totally forgotten that there was such a family in existence.

“ That

"That would be rather a difficult task," said Mr. Morley. "The name is as old as Alfred's."

"Were it contemporary with Adam's it were of little importance," replied Martha.

"Well!" sighed Julia, "of all things upon earth I should like to marry a man of an illustrious ancestry."

"And I wish you *bad* married one," interrupted Mrs. Morley; "for, in my opinion, existing worth is far more estimable than hereditary honours." At this moment lady Pen's chaise stopped at the lawn, and Mr. Morley requested that Julia would hasten to welcome her. "You are accustomed to persons of fashion, and will not feel embarrassed," said he.

Lady Pen had, before Julia tripped over the lawn, been handed from her chaise by sir Lionel Beacon. Julia's colour

colour changed, and an evident distress marked her demeanour, while she faintly articulated the joy she felt at so flattering a visit. Sir Lionel scarcely noticed Julia; while lady Pen, with a sorrowful tone remarked, that she was astonishingly altered!

"Amazingly thin and pale!" added Sir Lionel. "I hope you have been gay and full of fun since I saw you? Nothing like it! I beg you to be in spirits, for I shall not stay here long. I am going to see a famous fellow who is doing penance near Derby.

"A highwayman?" inquired Mr. Morley.

"No by Jupiter! a nobleman. An amazing good fellow, but astonishingly run out."

"By gaming?" said Mr. Morley.

"By all sorts of sport. A capital dasher. Has debauched more wives
and

and daughters than any man of his age in the three kingdoms."

"And what is he doing in Derbyshire?" said Mr. Morley.

"That is more than I know, and if I did, I would not tell," replied sir Lionel.

"Some snug intrigue; a 'squire's wife or a farmer's daughter. He has more things at nurse than his estate, I'll warrant him.—An amazing fine fellow, only five-and-twenty, and astonishingly knowing."

"I never heard of a young nobleman so sequestered in this part of the country," cried Mr. Morley, reddening.

"Perhaps Martha has," said Julia.

"Never," replied Mrs. Morley.

"How should you?" inquired sir Lionel. "He has changed his name, and passes for a country gentleman."

"A young nobleman passing for a gentleman; impossible!" said Martha.

"Pray,

"Pray how does he call himself?" said Mr. Morley.

"His real name is lord Francis Sher-ville."

"Francis!" repeated Mr. Morley.

"His travelling title is Mr. Wickham," added the baronet.

Here the conversation took another topic, and, at the conclusion of it a walk was proposed by sir Lionel, to make sport in the village. "I want to reconnoitre; perhaps there is some game worth starting, and I am amazingly fond of rural amusements," said the baronet.

In the evening sir Lionel's scheme was put in practice, and the whole group set out on foot; some to torment, and others to be tormented.

CHAP. XV.

ON passing the door of farmer Oldham's mansion, Mrs. Oldham, sitting by the roadside, was playing with little Fanny. Mrs. Morley stopped for a moment to embrace her *protégée*, when Julia informed lady Penelope, that there was a secret history attending the infant.

"A secret!" said her ladyship;
"Heavens let me hear it; perhaps we may find it out."

"The child is a fugitive, adopted by my sister, during her husband's journey on the continent."

"Perhaps it is her own," cried lady Pen.

Julia

Julia smiled.

Lady Pen communicated the intelligence she had just heard to sir Lionel: and he, without further ceremony, inquired of Mrs. Oldham to whom the child belonged.

"Nobody knows sir, excepting Mrs. Morley," replied Mrs. Oldham.

"That is amazingly astonishing!" cried the baronet. "There is something wonderfully famous in belonging to nobody:—and who is to provide for it."

"Heaven knows!" said Julia; "I am certain that Mr. Morley will not."

"Then I will," interrupted sir Lionel. "By Jove, the little vagabond sha'n't die for want of a parent. If every child were abandoned by its father, what would become of inheritance."

"You mean if every father owned his own children," said lady Pen.

“ Well, this may be mine for aught I know; and why should not I adopt it? It is not the first that has been at a loss where to claim its father: and it does not follow that, by being legitimate, it would do honour to its family.”

“ You would not be so frantic!” said lady Pen.

“ ’Tis better to be mad than inhuman,” replied the baronet: “ one disease is curable; but the other, being born with us, is beyond the reach of medicine.”

“ The whole world will condemn you,” said lady Penelope.

“ So will they poor little Nobody,” replied sir Lionel; “ and there are two reasons why I am the fittest to bear the world’s severity; first, because I am a man; and secondly, because I defy its opinion. I have made many a woman wretched; and I think it is time that

that I should, at least, endeavour to to make *one* happy.—It is a famous fine girl,—and astonishingly in luck. How do you call it?”

“Frances, sir,” said Mrs. Oldham.

“Sherville’s, by Jupiter!” exclaimed the baronet; “this accounts for his seclusion. I thought the hermit had his idol: he is too clever a fellow to lose his time for nothing.” Mr. Morley’s eyes seemed bent on vacancy; his brow was contracted; his arms were folded. Julia inquired emphatically what made him so thoughtful; and sir Lionel remarked that “it was a wise child who knew its own father.”

They returned to Morley-house; the evening passed merrily, but Mr. Morley was not present. His mind was too unquiet to be occupied or amused by trivial conversation. The name of Frances, the resemblance

which every body discovered between his wife and the infant; her ready acquiescence to accept his proposals of marriage; her illness during his absence, and all the concurring circumstances already related, established conviction in his mind, that he had been duped, and his wife dishonoured. "Why," said he, "did I select a girl of Martha's unpolished manners? because I thought that she possessed also a simplicity of character which would render her the domestic companion, the artless friend. She makes my house the rendezvous for intrigue. She adopts a bastard to dissipate my fortune. She avows opinions hostile to the authority of an husband; and she openly associates with the very dregs of the creation! It is now time to act decidedly."

Mr. Morley was walking on the lawn before the house, while he uttered this soliloquy.

soliloquy. Julia was at her chamber window, and overheard it; she descended; she approached him; she inquired tenderly why he had quitted the company; conjured him to rouse his spirits, and to banish every suspicion from his bosom.—“It is not, it cannot be possible that my sister, even for a moment, would deceive so amiable, so indulgent an husband; one who selected her when he might have chosen a wife from the whole race of women.”

Mr. Morley sighed and listened. Julia's motive was not that of tranquillizing a perturbed imagination; it was not that of harmonizing the chords of domestic unison. She had another motive. She wished to pique sir Lionel, who was at the same moment whispering soft nonsense to lady Pen at the parlour window. Mr. Morley, not knowing nor observing this circumstance, placed on Julia's conduct another interpretation.

Early on the following day sir Lionel set out on horseback, to find his friend lord Francis Sherville; who, as was before mentioned, from mysterious motives had assumed the name of Mr. Wickham. Mr. Morley, during his absence, employed the whole morning in making inquiries in the village—but to no purpose; nobody knew to whom Fanny belonged, or where she came from; though everybody spoke of Mrs. Morley's unbounded goodness towards her. While he was conversing with Mrs. Oldham upon the subject, his pulse beating quick with the fever of anxiety, sir Lionel and lord Francis passed them on horseback. Mr. Morley felt a sensation of mortified pride, at what he thought would look like jealousy, and a too familiar condescension. Sir Lionel observed his embarrassment, and riding up to the door of the farm-house presented

presented lord Francis; whose youth, handsome person, and easy elegance of manners, in no degree tended to sooth Mr. Morley's inquietude.

They returned to Morley-house; lord Francis and the baronet on horse-back; Mr. Morley on foot; consequently the two former (taking the high road, and the latter proceeding across the meadows) reached the lawn some time before him. On his approach he observed sir Lionel and lady Pen walking together; while lord Francis and Mrs. Morley were seated on a bench at the upper end of the lawn. Julia was standing at her chamber window, alone.

Mr. Morley's sensations were too poignant for the resistance of human fortitude. He therefore stopped short; took a circuitous path round the back of the house, and with an heart throb-

bing for revenge, hastened to communicate his feelings to the sympathizing Julia.

He entered her chamber pale and agitated. She flew towards him. "Heavens!" exclaimed the tender-hearted girl, "why are you thus distressed? who is that stranger that is walking with my sister?"

"Lord Francis Sherville."

"I thought so!" cried Julia; "yet I conjure you to do nothing rashly. He is a man much given to impetuosity."

"You know him then?"

"I saw him frequently when I was at Bath with my father."

"Did Martha see him too?"

"Unquestionably, she cannot but remember him," replied Julia.

"Why?" inquired Mr. Morley earnestly.

"Because

"Because he is so singularly handsome."

"Is he generally thought so?"

"By women invariably," replied Julia. "But he is less dangerous than handsome."

"Why?"

"Because he is a professed libertine—a practiced seducer."

"He shall not remain under my roof; he shall not, by Heavens!"

"Have patience," interrupted Julia. "I still hope that Martha is innocent."

"Did you ever doubt it?"

Julia after some hesitation replied,—
"How unkindly do you question me.—I love my sister dearer than my life.—I wish to think her worthy of such an heart as yours.—Let me therefore see you tranquil.—I cannot bear to witness your chagrin, your wretchedness." She was interrupted by her tears.

Martha now entered the house, to inquire whether Mr. Morley had returned. Mrs. Grimwood replied in the affirmative, at the same time adding: "My master is talking with Miss Julia in her bedchamber." Mrs. Morley was not more than woman; her dressing-room was adjoining to Julia's apartment; she felt herself drawn imperceptibly towards the key-hole, that mischievous aperture which Vulcan invented to annoy the daughters of his frail partner. Her head was bowed by chagrin, and her ear unfortunately met the chasm of communication, just as Mr. Morley's lips pressed the fair hand of Julia. She had heard enough to pique her pride, and to authorize her resentment. She returned to the garden.

Lord Francis was still pensively seated on the bench where Mrs. Morley had

had left him, sir Lionel and lady Pen having strolled to an alcove in an adjacent wilderness. — Mrs. Morley and lord Francis continued in close conversation; and among other things the fugitive infant became the subject of their discourse. The young nobleman was not without feeling, though dissipated and high-bred. The fate of little Fanny interested his heart; and when Mrs. Morley concluded her story, he involuntarily took her by the hand and pressed it.

Mrs. Morley's eyes were full of tears; she rose and, with lord Francis, entered the wilderness. The hour was yet early, and he proposed strolling to the farmhouse to see little Fanny. Mrs. Morley's bosom was shielded by conscious innocence, and she agreed to accompany him.

him. Julia saw them pass the garden gate; she watched them across the first meadow; she fell in tears into the arms of Mr. Morley, exclaiming, "Oh Heavens! is it possible?"

CHAP. XVI.

ON their arrival at Mrs. Oldham's they found little Fanny sleeping in her cradle. Lord Francis gazed earnestly at its features; they were flushed with the glow of noon, and she looked more beautiful than ever. Over her head was thrown a Cambric handkerchief. It was marked with the letter S, and a coronet. He inquired of Mrs. Morley what sort of woman the mother appeared to be. She described her minutely.—“Have you any of her hand-writing?” Mrs. Morley produced a short note, which she had received from her during her illness. Lord Francis changed colour as he read it; but made no comment.

They

They returned to Morley-house; but on entering the garden-gate a letter was presented to Mrs. Morley by Mrs. Grimwood, requesting that she would no longer insult the honour of her husband, but remain at farmer Oldham's till her conduct could be explained to his satisfaction. The letter also informed her, that her mother and Julia, unable to witness her imprudence, had during her absence set out for London.

Mrs. Morley's consternation was undescribable; but her pride was equal to her amazement. She turned from the gate, and in tears proceeded towards the farm-house. Lord Francis walked beside her, and conjured her to acquaint him with the cause of her distress. She could only articulate, "Little Fanny!"

"That

“That cause shall be removed,” said he; a few hours shall place Fanny in a new asylum. I will adopt her.” Mrs. Morley’s heart bounded with joy. — Her every wish seemed now accomplished. — How generous, how benevolently noble did such conduct appear, when contrasted with the jealous and suspicious pride of Mr. Morley. Her tears flowed in torrents, but they were tears of rapture; an helpless, unknown, innocent, and forsaken infant had found a liberal friend, a voluntary patron, at a moment when it was exposed to vulgar persecution. Mrs. Morley forgot her own forlorn and unprotected situation, in the good fortune of her little favourite.

Reader, you may remember that Mr. Morley offered to marry Martha without a dowry; and you may also conclude that Mr. Bradford accepted the proposal.

proposal. In consequence of this prudent arrangement, the ceremony of making a marriage-settlement was omitted; and Martha was now driven from her husband's home, without the means of future subsistence. She was young and handsome. Lord Francis was discerning and persuasive. — But Mrs. Morley's virtue had one invulnerable safeguard—Pride: not the little vanity of birth or fortune; the variegated bubble, Fame, blown from the trumpet of frothy adulation; it was the pride of a feeling mind, the dignity of self-approbation. She did not, like Julia, sigh or weep with ostentatious sensibility. Her feelings were not the effects of habit; they were the energies of nature.

As soon as they entered the farm-yard, a countryman was dispatched for a chaise, and lord Francis informed Mrs. Oldham of his purpose.

“ By

"By whose authority, sir, do you remove the child?" was Mrs. Oldham's question.

"By Mrs. Morley's."

"I grieve to part with it," said Mrs. Oldham.

"So should I," cried Mrs. Morley; "but that I know it will be kindly treated. Lord Francis will love it tenderly; I am sure he will; his heart is all feeling and generosity. He is not like Mr. Morley." She now recollected her recent insult; she shuddered. Lord Francis whispered, "Dear, amiable woman—why are you thus unhappy? I will provide for your little Fanny. I would, if you allowed me, be your protector also." — Mrs. Oldham departed to pack up Fanny's clothes, and Mrs. Morley was left in the parlour with lord Francis.

"Tell

“Tell your unfeeling husband,” said his lordship, “that this infant shall never more offend him.—Say that it is mine; that I will give it even my name.” Mrs. Morley’s heart glowed with admiration; but she had not courage to avow that she had been driven from her home; and thrown upon his mercy: there again her pride became her safeguard.

“How shall I contrive to see Fanny in future?” said Mrs. Morley.

“I shall place her with a friend near London, and you shall be informed of every thing I purpose.”

The chaise arrived. Fanny’s small bundle was put into it. Mrs. Oldham kissed the little fugitive. Mrs. Morley pressed it to her heart.—“I give thee, sweet infant,” said she, “to a warm and generous bosom, that will foster thee. I would, at the peril of any thing

thing less than reputation, toil to support thee. Go to the arms of thy noble, thy benevolent protector."—Again she kissed the cheek on which a tear from her eyes had fallen while she spoke. It looked like a rose, sprinkled with the dews of morning.—Lord Francis now took the infant in his arms; again Mrs. Morley kissed it. "I am but an awkward nurse," said he, smiling.

"You are an angel!" cried Mrs. Morley.—Lord Francis had placed his foot upon the step of the carriage, but such words, from such a woman, drew him back with something like magnetic influence. Mrs. Morley coloured.—Lord Francis took her hand.—"Did I hear you rightly?" said he.

"The expression was involuntary," replied Mrs. Morley.

"And therefore beyond all value," said lord Francis.

Mrs.

“Tell your unfeeling husband,” said his lordship, “that this infant shall never more offend him.—Say that it is mine; that I will give it even my name.” Mrs. Morley’s heart glowed with admiration; but she had not courage to avow that she had been driven from her home; and thrown upon his mercy: there again her pride became her safeguard.

“How shall I contrive to see Fanny in future?” said Mrs. Morley.

“I shall place her with a friend near London, and you shall be informed of every thing I purpose.”

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Mrs.

Mrs. Morley trembled. — She felt her danger; she was alarmed; her voice was inarticulate; he led her back to the parlour, and not knowing the magnitude of her distress at that moment, self-love interpreted its effects in his own favour! Mrs. Morley, fearful of his error, was now compelled to be explicit. “I am of all human beings the most unhappy,” said she. “I am abandoned by my family, and deserted by my husband; I can return to Morley-house no more.”

“Then go with little Fanny,” said lord Francis; “be her protectress.—See she smiles upon you; she implores you; can you resist the eloquence of nature!” Mrs. Morley leant on the arm of lord Francis; her eyes were bent upon the ground.

“Perhaps by my awkward nursing the little forlorn one will die,” said lord Francis. “I only wish to get it

lase to London.—Perhaps your mother will relent when I explain the business. Let me conduct you to her.”

Mrs. Morley had given Mrs. Oldham’s servant all the money she had about her, as a gratuity for her care of Fanny; and a thought now struck her, that she would be the best companion for lord Francis. The girl was called, she did not know the strange gentleman, and would not trust herself alone with him to London.

“Will you go with *me*?” said Mrs. Morley.

The girl consented, and in a quarter of an hour, they all set out together.

C H A P. XVII.

MR. Morley had taken three hours to ruminate on his conduct, when he ordered Mrs. Grimwood to go in search of his wife. "I have been rash," said he, "I have been hasty; she may yet be innocent." Lady Pen had not been idle during the morning; she had set a servant to watch lord Francis and Mrs. Morley, and she consequently knew all that had passed at farmer Oldham's.

"My wife is a foolish impetuous woman," said Mr. Morley.

"She will trouble you no more," cried lady Pen; "for she is far enough off by this time. Lord Francis will not relinquish her without some resistance."

"Lord

"Lord Francis!" cried Mr. Morley.

"Do you not know they are gone together?" said lady Pen.

"Whither?"

"That is an amazingly comical question!" said sir Lionel.

"A very natural one," replied Mr. Morley.

"The whole affair is perfectly natural," said lady Pen; "a young wife, who has a suspicious husband and an irresistible lover, can do nothing more natural than to plague the one, and make the other happy."

"For my part, I think the plan famous," said sir Lionel. "Sherville is an amazing fellow, and I honour his ingenuity. The thing has succeeded astonishingly, and Mrs. Morley has proved herself a woman of genius."

"Curse on her genius!" said Mr. Morley; "it was an evil one."

"A very liberal one notwithstanding," interrupted sir Lionel; "and a very popular one too?"

"Are they gone alone?"

"A family party," said lady Pen.

"O! if she is with her mother I am satisfied," said Mr. Morley.

Lady Pen laughed — sir Lionel hummed a tune. Lady Pen continued:

"Lord Francis will travel in a new character."

"It is the first time he has had any character at all," said sir Lionel.

"Your language is inexplicable," said Mr. Morley.

"As Sherville's conduct," interrupted the baronet.

"Is lord Francis gone with Mrs. Bradford and my wife?" inquired Mr. Morley. Mrs. Grimwood now entered
the

the room, and with a countenance that bespoke the nature of her intelligence. Lady Pen, wishing still to protract time for the purpose of favouring the escape of the runaway, abruptly stopped the housekeeper just as she was arranging her words and features for the solemn disclosure, by saying, "Mr. Morley knows all that you have to tell him. You may therefore spare yourself the trouble."

"I wish I could spare my master his heart ache," said Mrs. Grimwood; "but I knew how it would be from the first moment that I saw the infant."

"What infant, my wife's adopted fugitive?"

"My lord's acknowledged——"

Here Mrs. Grimwood stopped. The word which should have followed was too indelicate for the chaste lips of a venerable spinster.

"They are all gone together," resumed Mrs. Grimwood, "set off in a post chaise and four for London."

"Famous, by Jupiter!" exclaimed Sir Lionel.

"Infamous!" retorted Mr. Morley.

"I knew it all," cried the baronet. "We settled the thing astonishingly. I saw that you wanted to get rid of your wife, and your obligations to me are amazing."

"They *are* amazing indeed!" said Mr. Morley.

"There we differ in opinion," cried lady Penelope. "Nothing can be more common. I suspected the affair last year at Bath; and my suspicions were confirmed by Mrs. Morley's sudden marriage. I came hither merely to know what Lord Francis was doing; and the moment that I found him secluded, with an assumed name, I guessed

guessed how things were. Having seen the end of the comedy I shall bid you farewell." Her ladyship's chaise now drew up to the lawn, and Mr. Morley was again left to ruminate on his rash conduct.

C H A P. XVIII.

LORD FRANCIS and MRS. MMORLEY pursued their way towards LLONDON: the former, at times thoughtful, and at others impressively attentive; the latter, deeply penetrated by the unkindness of her husband, and almost fearful of presenting herself before her family.

On her arrival in Crutched Friars, she found the doors closed against her; the servant at the same time informing her messenger that Miss Julia was confined to her bed with grief for her sister's conduct, and that MMRS. BRADFORD was then on the eve of a second marriage. It was in vain that MMRS. MMORLEY sent frequent messages, intreating to be heard. It was equally useless that she wrote to explain

explain her conduct. Her letters were returned unopened; and without one guinea in her pocket, she found herself in the metropolis with no friend to succour, no home to shelter her.

Lord Francis, who had waited the event with impatience, again renewed his offer of protection: but Mrs. Morley's pride prevented her accepting it. She did not fear so much the pain of future want as the pressure of immediate necessity. After various and urgent applications to her mother, she received a donation of five guineas. The servant who delivered them informed her that they were the last she must expect, her mother and sister being determined never again to acknowledge her.

With this small pittance she hired a single apartment in a small house near Lincoln's-Inn Fields, wrote a letter to thank lord Francis for his kindness and

protection, and assured him that if at any future period he should repent his purpose respecting little Fanny, she would receive and support her by every exertion of industry and affection.

Lord Francis, on reading Mrs. Morley's letter, became almost frantic. Her mental and personal graces had made an indelible impression on his mind : but it was without success that he adopted every probable method of tracing her to the obscurity she had chosen ; it was in vain that he employed various persons to make inquiries. Mrs. Morley's high spirit rendered her virtue more secure in her mean habitation, surrounded with poverty and wounded by neglect, than it would have been under the roof of an imperious father or of a suspicious husband.

Mrs. Morley, finding every hope of family aid delusive, and seeing in a daily
paper

paper a pompous account of her mother's second marriage at the family seat in Kent, where oxen were roasted whole, rural diversions exhibited, and a large concourse of visitors invited, among others, lady Penelope Pryer and sir Lionel Beacon; and conscious that ostentation was the bane of true philanthropy, determined on employing her last guinea in advertising for an asylum as companion to a single lady. How was she to succeed without a character? Thence arose a difficulty which seemed insurmountable. At this important moment she recollected an old friend of her father's, a wealthy merchant, who resided in the city. She without reserve by letter unfolded her situation, obtained an interview, pleaded her innocence and her distress, and was promised both present pecuniary aid and future protection. Mr. Dodson was far ad-

vanced in years, a widower, and the father of a numerous progeny: his moral character was unblemished, and his connections, by his deceased wife's relationship to persons of fashion, were extended to the western circles of the metropolis.

A respectable situation was shortly after found; Mr. Dodson first requesting that Mrs. Morley would change her name, and carefully avoid every thing that might discover what had passed in her family. With reluctance she acquiesced; and under the assumed title of Mrs. Denison she became the humble dependent of lady Louisa Franklin.

The day after her entering on her new scene of trial lady Louisa set out for Tunbridge. She was a young widow, a few months before returned from the continent, where she had buried her husband; and nearly, by her assiduities
during

during his long illness, reduced herself to be the partner of his grave. Lady Louisa had resided several weeks at Tunbridge previous to Mrs. Morley's becoming an inmate of her family, and had only made a short visit to the metropolis for the purpose of arranging her late husband's affairs.

On Mrs. Morley's arrival at her new home she found every flattering prospect of felicity. Lady Louisa was gentle and amiable, strictly discreet, and, though handsome, liberal even to her own sex, in whatever situation Fortune had placed them.

It was late in the evening when they reached Tunbridge. Lady Louisa retired to rest; and Mrs. Morley, fatigued by the journey, and weary with rumination, also hastened to her chamber. Lady Louisa was of a pensive turn of mind. Sorrow for the loss of her husband had

thrown a gloom over her soul which dissipation could not gladden. She read much, visited but seldom, never gamed, and rarely smiled, except when she had an opportunity of relieving the unhappy.

A month passed, and Mrs. Morley's mind became reconciled to her situation. She almost entirely secluded herself, lest by being seen she should meet with some of her city friends, who might recollect her, even in her altered situation. Lady Louisa's retired mode of living favoured Mrs. Morley's concealment, and she had no cause for inquietude, excepting that which originated in her anxiety for the safety and health of little Fanny.

Mrs. Morley frequently found lady Louisa in tears. They passed many hours every day in reading, and the books which they selected were of the most

most romantic and melancholy kind. In the evening lady Louisa walked alone till the close of twilight. Her health required exercise, and her sincere regrets shunned the broad glare of day, as well as the inquisitive gaze of those insects that flutter in the meridian of fashionable splendor. Mrs. Morley, conceiving that lady Louisa exposed herself to some danger in her solitary twilight rambles, once ventured to propose accompanying her. Lady Louisa paused. "Alas! my dear Denison!" said she, sighing, "you little imagine that, by making you my companion, I should place a reputation in your hands!"

"A reputation!" repeated Mrs. Morley.

"I have a load of sorrow on my heart: by participation it might be lightened," said lady Louisa, bursting into tears.

The

The amiable qualities which characterised the speaker's mind interested her hearer with more than common sympathy. "You may trust me," said Mrs. Morley.

"Oh! could you pity a woman who, with the splendors of the world around her, with fortune, youth, and the affections of her family, forgot them all, and yielded herself up to misery and dishonour?" Mrs. Morley started.

"Heavens! lady Louisa!"

"Unless you can feel for such a woman, you must not hope for confidence."

"I can," said Mrs. Morley; "I *have* felt for such a woman." Here they were interrupted, and the conversation ended.

C H A P. XIX.

Mrs. MORLEY had no farther opportunity, that day, of speaking to lady Louisa alone. In the evening the lovely widow received a visit from sir Lionel Beacon, who had that morning arrived at Tunbridge, and who had been, during many months, the admirer of lady Louisa. Mrs. Morley's fears were awakened by the danger of detection; and she even meditated a disclosure of all that had passed, rather than live in a state of perpetual inquietude.

Several days elapsed, and sir Lionel was always eager to attend on lady Louisa. Her spirits became more cheerful, and she talked more gaily; her countenance wore a more animated appearance,

appearance, and her weeds, which she had worn near twelve months, were changed to a slighter mourning, as a signal that the storm of grief had abated; and nothing but an experienced pilot was now wanting to guide her course once more towards the port of matrimony.

Sir Lionel's motives were of a less moral tendency. He considered lady Louisa as fair game. She was young, handsome, tender-hearted, and a widow. The world considered her as immaculate; and that single opinion, even had she possessed less powerful attractions than those of mind and person, would have been sufficient to establish his plan of regular seduction.

Every day and every hour sir Lionel displayed his idolatry of the fascinating widow. The extraordinary graces of his figure rendered him a dangerous votary.

votary. He was pleasant and lively, but so misguided in his opinions of women, that he only estimated their worth in proportion as they evinced a partiality for his person. Mind, was to the fascinating baronet wholly unimportant, excepting where the fair possessor displayed a mind to render him happy. Yet sir Lionel had an excellent heart in every thing which did not appertain to women. He was good-tempered and thoughtless, yet liberal and brave. He was by nature formed "to love and to persuade:" but his education had been neglected. He had been finely, exquisitely moulded, but spoiled in polishing.

His attachment to lady Penelope Pryer had destroyed him; for judging of every woman by the sample she presented, he scarcely believed that the sex was capable of any thing noble, generous,

rous, or estimable. He was destined to discover his error in the society of lady Louisa Franklin.

The attentions of such a man naturally excited universal envy ; envy gave birth to conjecture, and conjecture naturally fostered the slanders of the malevolent. Sir Lionel was rather flattered than vexed by the buzz of calumny : he sought for *eclat* ; he delighted in notoriety. He knew that there were many fascinating women, but he wished to prove that there was but one Sir Lionel Beacon.

Mrs. Morley was not one of the many who suspected lady Louisa, but she was one of the few who pitied her approaching disgrace. Her name was already mentioned ambiguously, and her change of mourning was, by some good-natured observers, deemed a proof that single blessedness was no longer the widow's portion.

portion. She was too young to vegetate in a state of insensibility; she was too handsome to escape the discerning eyes of sir Lionel Beacon; she was too rich to want a friend, and too sentimental to pass a life of inanity. Such were the comments of the discerning and the malignant.

The baronet now always attended lady Louisa in her evening walks. They were frequently seen wandering along the fields and lanes in the vicinity of Tunbridge. At length it was rumoured that a red house, at about a mile distant, was the scene of rendezvous; and every person in the fashionable world considered the affair as a decided attachment.

Mrs. Morley entertained a sincere regard for lady Louisa, and was considerably chagrined by the reports which were circulated to her disadvantage. The spot of assignation had been confidently

dently mentioned; and under the firm persuasion that she should prove the report erroneous, Mrs. Morley resolved to make inquiries on the subject. For this purpose, one evening, when she knew that lady Louisa was engaged with sir Lionel, she set out on foot for the Red-house, fully convinced in her own mind that her friend had been slandered; and as firmly determined, in case she should be right in her conjecture, to inform lady Louisa of all that was reported.

The house had been minutely described, and she found no difficulty in obtaining admittance. She entered the parlour, and in a cradle, fast asleep, she discovered little Fanny! The joy which she experienced was not to be described. She fell upon her knees, snatched the infant to her bosom, kissed it a thousand times, and was just preparing

paring to make further inquiries, when lady Louisa and sir Lionel stopped at the door.

Mrs. Morley precipitately retreated through a back garden, and fortunately reached home without farther observation.

Lady Louisa made no scruple to avow her partiality for sir Lionel, and he was by the world considered as her acknowledged lover, when Mrs. Morley was informed that the baronet was not exclusively devoted to lady Louisa; for that he passed those hours which were not dedicated to her, with another female in the vicinity of Tunbridge. Love is blind; and every observer, excepting one, plainly discovered that sir Lionel's motives were not those of an honourable union. Mrs. Morley lamented the credulity of lady Louisa, at
the

the same time that she trembled for her safety.

On a moonlight evening, returning from a visit to little Fanny, she heard voices at a short distance before her. She discovered two persons walking slowly, and she knew the accent of one of them. It was the baronet. Concluding that his companion was lady Louisa, she walked slowly till she came to a garden gate. There he embraced her, and they parted. She returned home, and to her infinite surprise found lady Louisa alone. She had not been out of the house during the evening. Shortly after, while lady Louisa was undressing, Mrs. Morley, with brief sincerity, informed her of what had happened. The intelligence seemed to affect her, and to distress her extremely. She nevertheless thanked Mrs. Morley for her information, and assured her that she should consider it as a farther proof
of

of friendship if she would make more inquiries that might release her mind from the excess of anxiety. "In a few days," said lady Louisa, "I should have given my hand to sir Lionel. My present chagrin and future happiness depend on the truth or falsehood of your assertions."

The concluding words called a momentary blush into the cheek of Mrs. Morley. Her soul was too ingenuous to bear suspicion; and she resolved, even at the peril of discovering her own situation, to ascertain the extent of the baronet's apostacy.

Sir Lionel dined with lady Louisa the following day, but made excuses to depart early, saying he had business to transact of the utmost importance. It was in vain that lady Louisa requested

him to attend her to the Rooms : he was decided ; and his obstinate refusal more than half confirmed her apprehensions.

Mrs. Morley, whose regard for lady Louisa had more weight than any selfish consideration, followed the baronet at some distance till he again reached the garden gate. Three gentle taps were the signals for rendezvous, and again a female obeyed the summons. Mrs. Morley's zeal in the cause of friendship induced her to advance within hearing of the lovers. Sir Lionel's watchful eyes observed her in her ambush, and she was instantly made a prisoner. But the baronet was too accomplished an adept in the mysteries of gallantry to let a spy escape with intelligence. The garden gate was open, and Mrs. Morley
was

THE NATURAL DAUGHTER. 169

was led, unwillingly, to the house, where, on entering the first room, she discovered, pale and trembling, her own sister.

C H A P. XX.

JULIA shrieked, the baronet looked aghast, and Mrs. Morley nearly shrunk to the ground with confusion. "This is amazingly astonishing!" exclaimed sir Lionel. "Where the devil did you come from? and what is become of that famous fellow whom you left to console himself with old mother Grimbald? Why, you look as fresh as a daisy! and if you behave yourself, and don't blab, I will fall in love with you myself, to make you the fashion." Julia was near fainting.

"This is no house for a frolic!" continued the baronet: "old Crutched-Friars will soon spoil sport! Let us be off! Let us set the dowagers in an uproar!"

uproar ! You are amazingly handsome, and astonishingly in luck, and I am a famous fellow for protecting young heroines ! Besides, I want to break with the widow, and this will be an amazing opportunity ! What say you, Mrs. Morley ? Answer me quickly : catch me while you can ! Nothing like it !”

“ Sister,” said Julia, erecting her head, and endeavouring to suppress the emotions of jealous indignation, “ you will act wisely in avoiding the presence of our mother. Your indiscretion has nearly broken the hearts of all your relatives ; and after what has happened, you must be sensible that we can no longer acknowledge you.” Martha’s proud mind could not stoop to a further explanation : she quitted the room, and with a full heart returned home to lady Louisa.

Mrs. Morley had frequently endeavoured to discover by what means little Fanny became the *protégée* of lady Louisa Franklin, and all she could learn was, that a particular friend had placed the infant under her protection. "His name, and motive for so doing, are and must be a profound secret." Mrs. Morley dared not be too pressing in her interrogatories, lest it should lead to a suspicion that she had some knowledge of the infant.

On her return to lady Louisa's, she flew to her dressing-room, where she was waiting to prepare for the Rooms, when, on abruptly entering, she discovered lord Francis Sherville. She faintly shrieked, and would have retreated, but lord Francis, seeing a female, young and nearly overwhelmed with surprise, rushed after her. She would have concealed her face, but her hands

hands seemed to lose their power; and she was, without strength to resist, led back to lady Louisa's apartment.

"Heavens!" exclaimed lord Francis, lifting her veil, and pressing her hand to his lips, "do I behold Mrs. Morley?"

"Come, come, Frank," said lady Louisa, "this species of gallantry will not suit the manners of Mrs. Denison. I conjure you to make an apology for your rudeness, and to let her retire."

"Part with her!" exclaimed lord Francis; "no, no, Louisa; I know too well her value. She shall never go unless she condescends to take me with her. I have been the cause of her disgrace, and I will henceforth be her protector."

"Her disgrace!" repeated lady Louisa. While she was speaking, lady Pen Pryer was announced.

"Then I am indeed discovered!" said Mrs. Morley, sighing. Lord Francis led her to an adjoining room, while lady Pen was ushered into that of lady Louisa.

Mrs. Morley frankly unfolded all that had happened since she had seen lord Francis in London. She conjured him to extricate her from the embarrassment which would inevitably follow a discovery of her real name and situation: she expressed the most grateful sentiments of esteem and affection for lady Louisa, and declared that she should feel the most poignant affliction in losing her friendship and good opinion.

Though Mrs. Morley and lord Francis had precipitately retreated, they had not failed to excite the curiosity of lady Pen Pryer. She heard a door suddenly closed, and she found in lady Louisa's dressing-room a man's hat, which

which lord Francis had in his haste forgotten. These signs of still something more than met the eye, determined her to satisfy her ruling propensity, even at the expence of friendship and good manners. There had been some busy tongues, which, though lady Pen had not arrived two hours, conveyed the popular topic to her ear; and the almost incessant attentions of sir Lionel to lady Louisa, produced her present unseasonable visit.

Concluding that the baronet was the person concealed, and thinking to enjoy the double gratification of exposing her lover, and destroying the reputation of her friend, she resolved on waiting till midnight, rather than relinquish her post of curiosity. Mrs. Morley and lord Francis knowing the mania of lady Pen, and dreading the result of her inquiries, concerted a plan to defeat her.

The room where they were concealed opened to a long balcony-gallery, from which lord Francis descended, not without some peril, to the high-road : — determining to wait near the door till lady Pen's departure, and then to inform lady Louisa that he had been mistaken in the person of Mrs. Morley, for which he would readily make an apology in any manner, in which she would condescend to accept one.

While lady Pen was sitting at the toilette of her friend, her cheek glowing with rage, and her eyes darting the lightnings of jealous vengeance, sir Lionel entered the room. He did not expect to find lady Penelope ; and for a moment he seemed embarrassed : but recovering his *nonchalance*, he inquired, “ Well, my dowager, what mischief are you plotting? You seem astonishingly busy, no doubt
in

in some famous conspiracy ; for women are amazingly fond of mystery."

" We leave that to your sex," said lady Pen ; " you are wonderfully sagacious."

" Nothing like it," replied the baronet. " I have been frolicking with a brace of city dames, astonishingly handsome."

Lady Louisa smiled with proud contempt.

" This will not do," cried lady Penelope ; " I heard you."

" So much the worse for you," said the baronet ; " for I have been making love ever since sun-set."

" And making fools," said lady Pen.

" That I leave to the women," replied sir Lionel ; " but if I do not tell truth may I be scouted for a blockhead. I have been amused famously. An astonishing good frolic, by Jupiter !"

“ You may call it a frolic to be detected with a woman who pretends to character; you may call it famous, but I call it profligate in the extreme !” said lady Penelope.

“ What ! are you going to preach me a sermon ?” interrupted sir Lionel; “ but since you seem to know all, I need not take the trouble to deny it.”

Lady Penelope now rose and departed; and in less than an hour nothing was heard in the Rooms but that sir Lionel Beacon had been detected concealed in lady Louisa’s bed-chamber.

CHAP. XXI.

ONE of the first persons whose ear met this unpleasing intelligence, was Miss Julia Bradford. It was communicated by lady Pen, with all appropriate embellishments; and the credulous fair one was carried to her lodgings in violent hysterics. While the buz was going round with all its vehemence, sir Lionel and lady Louisa entered the Rooms; and shortly after them Mrs. Popkins, (late Mrs. Bradford,) who informed the whisperers, one by one, that sir Lionel had been seen by one of her footmen descending from the balcony of lady Louisa's apartment. This was indubitable confirmation; and the supposed

guilty parties were by the whole circle sent to Coventry.

Sir Lionel, who was little accustomed to neglect, soon discovered that some mystery was on foot, inimical to his fame and popularity. Mrs. Popkins and lady Pen were prominent figures on the theatre of scandal; and the baronet was the theme of public animadversion, when lord Francis entered the circle; his leg had been grazed in descending from the balcony, and he wore his handkerchief wrapped round it. The singularity of this circumstance diverted the torrent of malevolence; and lord Francis's accident was for a moment thought more interesting than even sir Lionel gallantry.

"Good Heavens! my lord," exclaimed Mrs. Popkins, "how did you come by that leg."

"I was

"I was born with it, madam," said lord Francis gravely.

Mrs. Popkins was struck dumb, when lady Penelope inquired how long lord Francis had been at Tunbridge.

"From the moment that I arrived," said his lordship.

The baronet now exclaimed, "What brought you here, lord Francis?"

"Four horses," was the laconic answer.

The inquisitive circle now finding that their motives were defeated, resorted to the popular topic of the evening, but the presence of lord Francis reduced the eloquence of embellishment to little more than monosyllables, accompanied by shrugs, smiles, sighs, hems, ha's, and nods of confirmation.

Lady Louisa finding herself eyed askance by the fastidious, shunned by the correct, and familiarly addressed by the profligate,

profligate, thought it time to elucidate the mystery of her brother's concealment, by asking him aloud, "how he could rashly hazard his life, by descending from such a dangerous eminence!"

This brief question opened all eyes with astonishment. Lady Louisa shortly after quitted the scandalous committee; and lady Penelope's indefatigable mind was once more employed in the labour of conjecture.

Mrs. Popkins, on her return home found her daughter Julia seriously indisposed; the shock which she had received, she attributed to her unexpected interview with her sister, of which circumstance she now availed herself in order to disguise the real cause of her agitation. Mrs. Popkins was overwhelmed with chagrin. What! all her honours, all her consequence to be blighted in its full bloom, by the presence

sence of an imprudent, outcast daughter ! The idea was not to be borne. Julia wept abundantly. " Ah, my love ! " exclaimed Mrs. Popkins, " your delicate sensibility cannot bear to witness the folly of our graceless Martha ; we will therefore quit this scene of humiliation, and endeavour to forget her. "

The carriage was ordered to be at the door on the following morning ; Mrs. Popkins sent cards of *cong  * to all the fashionable water-drinkers ; and at nine o'clock they were ready for their departure.

C H A P. XXII.

It so happened that Mrs. Morley had been to the Red-house to see little Fanny, and was returning along the lane near the garden-gate of her mother's habitation, when the carriage drew up for their departure. The throbbings of filial affection had not been subdued by the chilling unkindness or austere pride of Mrs. Popkins; and Martha, the scorned, neglected, and outcast Martha, stood near the coach-door when her mother sallied forth to enter it. Her countenance was dejected; but her cheek was flushed with perturbation; she heard the sound of her mother's voice, and the deep colour

colour in a moment became pale as ashes.

Mrs. Popkins appeared, leading her favourite Julia. Martha stepped forward.—“Oh madam!” exclaimed she, “can you, will you refuse to own me?” Julia placed her hand before her eyes and trembled; while Mrs. Popkins, with dignified apathy, ascended the carriage.—Mrs. Morley’s heart was almost bursting with distress; conscious of unmerited disdain, and yet glowing with the pride of virtuous indignation. The coach drew on, and Mrs. Morley stood watching its progress till it turned a corner, and she lost sight of it.

While she remained in her reverie, sir Lionel arrived to take leave of Julia. Mrs. Morley was little pleased by the interruption of such a visitor, and would have departed; but the baronet was not easily discarded; he rejoiced in the absence

fence of Julia, because it afforded him an opportunity of addressing a new object. Mrs. Morley knew not how to act. She dared not return to lady Louisa's lodgings, knowing that sir Lionel would follow her; and that the plan she had concerted with lord Francis would by that means be frustrated. She continued walking along the lane, when turning an angle suddenly, she met lady Penelope on horseback, attended by lord Francis Sherville.

Mrs. Morley's consternation was visible; she could scarcely support herself: lady Pen's indignation was no less marked; but the most evident astonishment, blended with regret, expressed itself in every feature of lord Francis. They passed each other without any comment, excepting from sir Lionel, who remarked that, "Old Pen would
be

be amazingly jealous, and astonishingly unhappy."

The baronet seeing little prospect of *eclat* in his lonely walk with Mrs. Morley, and knowing that at that hour the public *promenades* were thronged with visitors, took his leave, and set out in search of lady Louisa. But she was otherwise engaged, in listening to the morning discovery which had been made by lady Penelope Pryer. While they were deeply engaged in conversation, Mrs. Morley unexpectedly entered the room. "By Heavens! the very woman!" exclaimed lady Pen; "the runaway wife of Mr. Morley, and the avowed mistress of lord Francis Sher-ville!"

Mrs. Morley's distress was now brought to its climax. Lady Penelope's words confirmed all that had passed

passed on her meeting lord Francis the preceding evening; and she was requested by lady Louisa to quit the apartment. She obeyed; and dreading the unpleasant embarrassment that would attend an elucidation of events, resolved without further delay to escape from the scene of persecution.

With this determination she engaged a place in the stage-coach; and having some hours to spare, resolved once more to take her leave of Fanny. The carriage was obliged to pass the door of the Red-house, and the driver had promised to call there for her.

Mrs. Morley had wept and sighed over her little favourite, till twilight had some time closed, when the stage-coach stopped at the door. Again she kissed the rosy cheek of Fanny; again she fervently recommended her to the protection

tection of that Being, who guards the innocent and sustains the feeble. The coachman was in haste; and Mrs. Morley, depressed almost to despondency, again set out for London.

CHAP. XXIII.

BEFORE day-light Mrs. Morley reached the place of her destination. She had not uttered one syllable since she quitted Tunbridge, and the night being imperviously dark, the journey had seemed tediously long. When they stopped at the inn door in Holborn, a passenger descending, put forth his hand to assist her; she accepted his aid, and thanked him. It was lord Francis.

Her astonishment was infinite. She had not power to speak; lord Francis conjured her not to be offended; declared that his motive was merely that of protecting her; and requested permission to render himself useful, in whatever was requisite for her honour and tranquillity.

Mrs.

Mrs. Morley's situation was perplexing in the extreme. She had neither friends nor home to receive her. The attention, of lord Francis at such a moment made her tremble ; but the magnitude of her peril again served to awaken the energy of her soul. She knew that she could only by stratagem escape the spell that surrounded her, and she therefore for the present accepted his offers of attention.

They entered the inn. A waiter was dispatched to provide a convenient lodging for Mrs. Morley, who still assumed the name of Denison. A second-floor in the vicinity of Bloomsbury-square was speedily hired ; and, in the evening, she repaired thither, accompanied by lord Francis.

The first-floor was occupied ; Mrs. Morley and her protector passed the remainder of the day together. His

conduct respectfully attentive ; and her spirits sunk into the deepest melancholy. During several days lord Francis repeated his visits ; till one morning, on entering her apartment, she observed his countenance as pale as death : he attempted to speak, but his voice faltered ; and he threw himself into a chair without uttering a syllable.

Mrs. Morley was alarmed ; her heart at that moment first told her, that it owned lord Francis as its sovereign. She was afflicted even to agony. He appeared to her a new creature ; and she could not conceal the interest his situation excited. Lord Francis being somewhat recovered, thanked Mrs. Morley, and departed. Four days passed and she neither heard from nor saw him. Her fears interpreted his silence, to the most dreadful calamity that could now befall her. All the pangs
which

which persecution, poverty, and scorn had hitherto inflicted on her bosom, seemed trivial in comparison with its anxiety for the safety of lord Francis.

During this period of suspense, a new gleam of hope opened to her view. She was informed by the mistress of the house where she lodged, that the lady in her first-floor was a provincial actress of the most promising talents. Mrs. Morley had often meditated a dramatic trial; and in her present forlorn and unprotected situation, the attempt seemed irresistible. Without ceremony she introduced herself to the stranger; and to her utter astonishment instantly recognized, in her altered situation, the mother of little Fanny.

The meeting cannot be described;—joy, shame, gratitude, hope, fear, and astonishment succeeded each other:—while the agitated mother, falling on

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The meeting cannot be described;—joy, shame, gratitude, hope, fear, and astonishment succeeded each other:—while the agitated mother, falling on

Mrs. Morley's neck inquired, "Is my child still living?"

The cause of lord Francis's sudden distress, and the motive for his having discontinued his visits, now appeared evident. Mrs. Morley had long suspected that he was the father of Fanny, and her suspicions were by his absence confirmed indubitably. She therefore without hesitation informed Mrs. Sedgley, (for such she learnt was the name of Fanny's mother,) of all that had happened. When she came to that part of her story which mentioned lord Francis having taken the infant under his protection, Mrs. Sedgley exclaimed, "Oh heavens!" and fainted.

The consequence of this disclosure was a determination on the part of Mrs. Sedgley to quit London. On the following morning Mrs. Morley proposed being the companion of her journey, which

which was to join a company of comedians then performing at a provincial theatre. Mrs. Morley felt a strong inclination to adopt a profession which promised both fame and independence. An arrangement was immediately made, and at seven o'clock they commenced their journey together. The stage coach having no other passengers, the dramatic heroines soon became perfectly acquainted; and, as ingenuous minds are naturally communicative, Mrs. Sedgley, with little hesitation began to unfold the history of her own misfortunes.

CHAP. XXIV.

THERE is a degree of innate vanity which possesses enlightened minds, whether they are raised and refined by nature or by education, which renders the pain of suppressing their prouder feelings more intolerable than even the humiliations of poverty or neglect. Mrs. Sedgley felt this intuitive pride. She had been accustomed to respect, esteem, and attention, and she could not bear the idea of being treated as one divested of those claims which expansion of intellect entitled her to feel. Conscious that fortune was her foe, and labouring under a stigma, of which she knew herself undeserving, she resolved to lose

no time in exciting an interest in Mrs. Morley's bosom, by that candour which is the sure basis of friendship and affection.

As soon as the wheels of their carriage ceased to roll over the pavement of the metropolis, Mrs. Sedgley addressed her companion. "I feel myself bound by all the laws of gratitude and sincerity," said she, "to unfold, in some measure, the origin of my past and present vicissitudes. You have taken a liberal and noble interest in my destiny. You once preserved that which was dearer to me than life; but which pride and the dread of exposure would have tempted me to abandon.

"Early in infancy I lost my mother; my father was of a temper sternly and haughtily reserved; he was proud even to imperious tyranny. Born to a situation of life which invested him with

power over his inferiors, he acknowledged no distinctions but those of rank and birth. It was my misfortune to be of a disposition rash and impetuous.—I loved my father tenderly; but I could not wear the trammels of severe restraint without repining—even in his presence. When I was eighteen years of age, my father proposed retiring to his estate in Scotland, where a Gothic castle, which had been uninhabited ever since his minority, was preparing for his reception. It was situated on a craggy steep which ever-shadowed a valley. The ramparts were covered with ivy, and the turrets just peeped above the trees that had, for ages, darkened the acclivity.

“The domestics who had been to Scotland for the purpose of rendering this spacious castle habitable, returned with accounts so melancholy, with legends so terrific,

terrific, that I felt my soul shudder at the thought of becoming the inmate of a dwelling so solitary, and so calculated to inspire the mind with all the horrors of romance. My father paid little attention to my feelings on this subject; he hinted that if he could bear seclusion so gloomy, and content himself in abjuring the busy scenes of social intercourse, no other part of the family had a right to form the least objection.—The day was fixed for our departure.

“ Just at this period a woman of rank and education, a particular friend of the family, was on the point of setting out for Italy. She had wearied herself by fashionable pleasures, was going for the benefit of her health, and informed my father that she should be happy in having me as a companion. The thought delighted me. My entreaties were united with tears; and my parent, never having been fond of me, was soon per-

suaded to consent. We set out together. I thought myself the happiest of mortals.

“Two years elapsed, and we continued in Italy: we passed our winters at Naples; our summers at Pisa. Time flew on pinions of delight, and no melancholy thought ever interrupted my felicity, excepting when memory brought to my view, aided by the strong powers of Fancy, the gloomy turrets and the ivied ramparts of the old Scottish castle. Never did the declining possessor of an hereditary palace feel a more acute sense of horror in contemplating the mausoleum of his ancestors, where he should end his vain career of splendour, than that which I experienced when I reflected that I should suddenly be transported from the enchanting, the ecstatic scenes of Italian luxury, to the
thorny,

thorny, mouldering, noiseless solitudes of Drumbender Castle.

“ The tumults attending the continental war, alarmed my travelling protectress; and to my inexpressible chagrin, I was informed of her sudden determination to revisit her native country. During my absence from England I had frequently written to my father; but though by other channels I knew that he was in health, I never received the smallest proof of notice or solicitude from him. The last letter which mentioned his name, informed me that he was become a perfect misanthrope; more cynical than Timon, more solitary than an anchorite: that he excluded every thing human from his society; passed his whole time in abstruse studies; and had resolved, on my return to England, to make me the sole companion of his perpetual sequestration.

“The volatile spirit of my heart nearly caused it to burst at receiving this intelligence. I beheld all the visionary horrors of Drumbender Castle. I saw, in imagination, all the mystic wonders which adorn the pages of the most popular romances: I felt as though I were destined to develope mysteries, to traverse midnight glooms and subterraneous caverns. I beheld, amidst the moonlight avenues of haunted forests, pale and ghastly spectres, bearing their airy poinards drenched in blood. — I heard their groans, their thrice echoed warnings; and I even anticipated the hour when I should wander a pale ghost upon the mountain-side, while the castle bell should toll me to my hidden grave. — I was almost frantic.

“We set out for England: on our arrival on the French frontiers we found some difficulty in procuring horses; and
still

still more in obtaining provisions, during our short sojourn at a miserable post-house by a wood-side. I proposed proceeding without taking any refreshment; but our host of *le bonnet rouge* informed us, that we should encounter no small peril in departing after sun-set: — ‘For,’ said he; ‘all soldiers are men of gallantry, and pretty women are fair plunder in times of hostility.’ My friend smiled and replied, that she did not fear any thing they might attempt; ‘For,’ added she, ‘courage and humanity are uniformly allied, whatever warfare there may be among kings and kingdoms.’

“This compliment produced the desired effect: the landlord thanked my companion for the good opinion she entertained of his nation; and the carriage was ordered to the door without further interruption. But just as we

were stepping into it, a courier approached the step. We demanded to know his business. — ‘I belong,’ said he, ‘to an English gentleman, whose horses have been taken from his chaise by the French soldiery; and who, finding it impossible to proceed for want of a fresh supply, requests as a particular favour, if you have room in your carriage, that you will convey him as far as the next post-house.’ My companion, as well as myself, was delighted at the idea of finding not only a countryman, but a protector. In a few minutes the traveller approached on foot; recounted his misfortunes without the smallest deviation from the courier’s story, and after a short interview at the carriage-door, we agreed to accept him as a companion.

“His conversation was enlightened, his manners polished, and his person hand-

handsome ; we travelled not only safely but merrily ; each heart silently congratulating itself for the good fortune and security which had attended our hazardous expedition.

“ On our arrival at Paris, we found every thing wild and licentious. Order and subordination were trampled beneath the footsteps of anarchy : the streets were filled with terrifying *spectacles* ; and the people seemed nearly frantic with the plenitude of dominion ; while the excess of horror was strongly and strikingly contrasted by the vaunted display of boundless sensuality.

“ I had passed a few days in Paris, two years before, in my *route* to Italy : the change was awful and impressive. I sighed when I recollected the causes of the metamorphosis, and I shuddered while I contemplated the effects.

“ We

“ We hired a *suite* of rooms at the *Hotel de la Revolution* ; for our departure was no longer optional. We were informed that we must give a full and circumstantial account of ourselves ; whence we came ; whither we were going ; what were our occupations, names, ages, places of birth, motives for travelling, political sentiments, rank, fortune, and connections, before we could possibly be permitted to pass through the land of universal liberty.

“ On the evening of our arrival, while I was undressing, an elegant girl, about seventeen years of age, came tip-toe into my chamber. She pressed her finger on her lip, and at the same time presented me the key of the Hotel. — I was at first at a loss to comprehend her meaning, but she sighed and shook her head, while she inarticulately whispered, ‘ Be away so soon as possible ; — you
are

are no safe in the Hotel of mine father.'

"I hastened to the apartments of my companions,—gave the alarm with as much caution as possible, and after presenting the amiable girl a gold locket with a Venetian chain, which I wore round my neck, (for she refused to accept money as a reward for her kindness,) we all stole down the stair-case into the garden of the *Palais Royale*.

"There we found a throng dancing by torch-light to the cymbal and the tambourine.—The women were dressed like Bacchanalians; and the men like the frantic fiends of Pandemonium. The moon, which rose over the trees, was eclipsed by the flaming torches; and the *tout ensemble* inspired the mind with terror and astonishment. We had not been many minutes spectators of this extraordinary scene, when I felt my
arm

arm gently pressed. I looked round, and observed the lovely girl who had been our deliverer, with a young French foldier. I instantly knew her countenance, for it was too beautiful to be forgotten: but her dress was wholly changed. — Her arms were naked to the shoulders, her robe flowed loosely, displaying her left leg nearly as high as the knee. Her brows were dressed with roses; her bosom was uncovered.

“ ‘Heavens!’ exclaimed I, ‘I should not have known you!’ She laughed while she suppressed a sigh. — ‘I am so obliged to follow the example of others,’ said she; ‘my own safety tell me to make the sacrifice. This is Henri Saint Val, my love,’ added she; ‘we will go to be marry to-morrow, and I am go to serve with him *en Flanders*.’ I smiled.

“ ‘Indeed!’ said she, ‘I speak what is true; I am very much love of him; and

and I must die if he fall in battle!' — The tone of her voice and the sweet smile she gave her Henri, drew my attention wholly from the bacchanalian dancers. She requested that I would not remain in the garden of the *Palais Royale*, where there were spies of every description lurking under every colonnade to seize on the unwary. We took her advice, and sought a lodging in the Fauxbourg Saint Germain.

“ The good genius of Lifette did not continue to protect us ;—for on the following day we were arrested, and, under separate guards, conveyed to the prison of the Abbaye.

“ There how often did I sigh for the solitudes of Drumbender. How did I wish to encounter all the spectres of the Scottish Castle, rather than await the mandate of a sanguinary judge ; for at that period the monster, MARAT, was in
the

the full zenith of his power. The ivy battlements, the mouldering turrets of my family habitation were chearful and exhilarating objects, when Fancy placed them in comparison with the damp walls and triple bars of my subterraneous dungeon. I was now taught to know that all human happiness is felt only by comparison.

“At the expiration of three weeks I found that our travelling companion had, though the intercession of the British Court, been liberated. And on the same morning that this intelligence reached me, I received a note from him, informing me that if I would consent to become his wife, I should also be set at liberty.—I requested two days to consider, before I gave a decided answer to his proposal.

“Every hour during this tedious interval I heard of public executions.

The

The tocsin sounded night and day. The cannon shook my dungeon with concussions that made me tremble. I heard the hoofs of horses, as the troops passed my prison to attend the restless process of the guillotine.—I accepted the proposal made me by the English traveller; — life was the temptation offered; and I had not fortitude to resist it.

“ On the same night we were married *à la Revolution*. — My husband promised to procure my emancipation. We obtained, by the powerful mediator gold, a *suite* of convenient and even comfortable apartments in the upper story of the prison. A week only had passed, when to my unutterable chagrin I was informed, that my husband had set out for England; and that the pretended priest who had united us was
nothing

nothing more than the *valet de chambre* of the infamous Marat.

"I next inquired after my female friend and *chaperone*. She also had been gone to England several days. I was almost despairing. Five months passed, and I was still in prison; when one day an unknown visitor entered my apartment. He addressed me with politeness; complimented my personal attractions; and offered me my freedom, but on terms that made me shudder. I rejected the proposal.

"My visitor now assumed another aspect; he affected to treat me as an avowed licentious character; abused the prudish cunning of women of my nation; laughed at all laws, moral and divine; assured me that none but the sons of Liberty knew how to live; and declared, that if I would consent to share his destiny, my will should be omnipotent.

potent.—Still I disdained to accept my freedom on terms so base, so repugnant to my feelings.

“He now drew a paper from his pocket. It contained a list of thirty signatures. ‘These,’ said he, ‘I have ordered for immediate execution. I have only one to add.’—The monster then commanded me to write my name.—He transcribed it on the list of death. I sunk upon the ground before him.—Neither my horror-stricken countenance nor my situation, for I was then visibly with child, seemed to affect him.—He assumed a demonian smile; and, as he was quitting the apartment, exclaimed: “*Songez Citoyenne; ou Marat, ou la guillotin!*”

“I now discovered that the barbarian inquisitor was the despot Marat; whose death on the following day rescued me from misery or annihilation But alas!
 though

though permitted to depart for England, I was not in a situation to appear before the eyes of an offended family. I dreaded their austere opinions on political events; and I knew that every thing which bore the faintest shadow of democracy was hateful to their feelings. The horrible scenes which I had recently witnessed justified their sentiments, and had I dared to present myself before them, I would have convinced their minds, that though an idolater of Rational Liberty, I most decidedly execrated the cruelty and licentiousness which blacken the page of Time, while History traces the annals of this momentous æra. But alas! the impetuosity of political partizans, will not permit them to draw conclusions with candour, or to judge opinions by the fair rule of reason. Every individual who shrinks from oppression, every friend to the superior claims of worth and genius, is,
in

in these suspecting times, condemned without even an examination; though were truth and impartiality to influence their judges, they would be found the first to venerate the sacred rights of social order, and the last to uphold the atrocities of anarchy.

“ My family paid little attention to causes, and were only led to draw their conclusions from effects. I had been compelled to form an union for the preservation of existence. But I *had* formed it, and that circumstance was sufficient to stigmatize me in their opinion for ever. I had received many letters from them, demanding to know the name of my husband. Ah! how severe were the conflicts of my heart; I loved the betrayer of my confidence, and though he had exposed me to every insult, to misery and death, I made a vow never to reveal his name, or to
subject

subject him to the fury and resentment of my family. This oath I have kept inviolate.

“ Finding myself alone, in a perilous state of health, in a strange country, where massacre and devastation every hour raised their hydra heads above all laws human and sacred, I resolved to depart for my native kingdom; where, though sorrowful, depressed, and persecuted, I still hoped to find protection and repose. I knew that there lived in Britain, women who had feeling, and men, who to the character of the philosopher added that of the philanthropist. In my early youth I had been known to one female, whose illustrious virtues placed her far above even her exalted rank. I knew that from her bosom the benignant graces of sensibility and generosity banished the mean fastidious scorn which, in less enlightened beings, acts as a watch-

a watch-guard on the feelings, keeping aloof the noblest sentiments of friendship and humanity. This amiable woman was the duchess of Chatworth; whose virtues will live on the records of a thousand hearts, when fortune, birth, and titles are no more remembered.

“ On my journey towards Calais, near a scattered village within two miles of Abbeville, I observed a young woman sitting on a small rude bench at the door of a cottage, situated on the skirts of a thick wood. She was singing a melancholy ditty, but with a tone so touchingly mournful, that it seemed to vibrate on my heart. The day was serene, and it was near the hour of sunset. I alighted from my cabriolet, and proceeded along a narrow path, just within the wood; by which means I soon came behind the cottage unseen

by the melancholy songstrefs. The sweetness of the air, which she sang with a still sweeter voice, induced me to pause and to listen. My postillion being like myself, inclined to indulge his fancy, stopped his horses at a little distance, while he arranged his pipe and began to smoke it deliberately.

The words which the young damsel chanted so sweetly were French; I copied them as she twice repeated the verses, and, on my arrival at Abbeville, translated them into English."—Mrs. Sedgley then recited these stanzas :

Hark ! 'tis the merry bells that ring
 On yonder upland sunny green ;
 Their sounds to mournful mem'ry bring
 The blissful days and hours I've seen !
 Their swelling changes die away,
 So did my heart's best love decay !

Hark !

Hark ! 'tis the Beetle sitting round,
 O'er yonder hawthorn fresh and sweet;
 Once could I mock the drowsy sound—
 With Henry on the greensward seat;
 But now, I weep to hear its tone,
 For O! my heart's true love is flown!

Hark ! 'tis the Raven's dismal croak,
 My boding breast is chill'd with fear!
 Yet once, beneath yon spreading oak
 The bird of woe, I smil'd to hear:
 For love and fancy cheared the gloom,
 Where now the turf is Henry's tomb!

Come, pale-cheek'd vestal of the night,
 And spangle the long grass with dew;
 Dress the tall woods with silv'ry light,
 And buds of fragrant flowrets strew,
 While Love in secret sorrow hies,
 To guard the grave where Henry lies!

There will I lay me down forlorn,
 And close my weeping eyes, and die!
 And when the smiling blushing morn
 Shall rush along the eastern sky,
 There shall the thronging village see,
 To part no more—my love and me!

“The solitary mourner,” continued Mrs. Sedgley, “was poor Lifette ! my heart thrilled with pity when I beheld her figure, which presented the languor of incurable affliction. Too readily did I conjecture that her misfortune was irremediable ; her Henry, the hero of her affections, the cause of her despair, had fallen in battle. I approached her, —my bosom throbbed with all the agonies of sympathy. — She looked at me without the smallest change of countenance. — Her eyes were full of tears. — Her dark hair was fastened up with a band of laurel leaves ; she had a black knot of riband on her left side, just upon her heart. The evening being warm, she wore nothing but her corset with a short white petticoat ; it is impossible to describe a figure more interesting.

“The

“The chain and locket which I had given to her at Paris were round her neck. As I looked earnestly at them she suddenly arose from her seat, and hid the latter within her corset. I advanced a few paces,—she stopped me with her hand extended, while her eyes looked eagerly towards the door of the cottage. I perceived the impulse of her mind,—she was fearful that I should interrupt the scene of sacred sorrow.—‘You cannot enter,’ said she; ‘Happy is no one in this little hovel.—We are all sorrow, for since my love was die, we have no joy to see the stranger.’

“I begged her to forgive me, and was departing, for my heart was too full to check the tears which rushed into my eyes.

“‘You have tears for poor Lisette!’ said she, taking my hand, and looking earnestly under my downcast eye-lids.—

‘ You can pity my distress! — You have perhaps know my Henri?’ then taking the locket again from her bosom she added; ‘ it is his hair—I did cut it from his forehead so white, after the bullet fatal did lodge in his brave heart. They did bury him in the cimetiere on the side of that green hill;—do you not see it yonder? I have not go home, I live in the little cottage of his mother; for I have promise not to go leave him, never!’

“ She spoke with a smile, though her eyes glistened with tears. Her senses were scattered, but not lost: she now knew me; and inquired how I had escaped from Paris. She invited me into the cottage; but I declined entering.—I sat myself down at the door; the little bench was over-hung with roses, and a thick vine covered the whole front of the thatched dwelling.

Again

Again she looked towards the hills. 'There,' said she, 'after the battle was all done, there he was buried! you have seen him at Paris. He was as beautiful as the sun of the morning! I have loved him dearly; I shall forget him never!'

"Night was rapidly advancing, and the postillion reminded me that he could not lose time while I was talking with mad folks. I perceived that his pipe was exhausted, and Lifette shook her head. 'I should be happy,' said she, 'if I was mad; for then I should forget what I now cannot help feel. Helas! he had not known Henri, or he would have very much pitied me!'

"I entered the cabriolet and she kissed my hand. Her lips were feverish, her face was as pale as death, and her large dark eyes seemed to penetrate my soul.

"We parted, I drove swiftly towards Abbeville.—She strolled towards

the hill. I saw her ascend the little beaten path, till the postillion's clacking whip reminded me that I was near the inn.

"I dreamed all night of Lifette and her sorrows: on the following morning I awoke with a violent head-ach, which prevented my quitting my pillow; and before noon I was overwhelmed with fever. The hostess of the inn proposed my staying till the succeeding day; not thinking it prudent that I should continue my journey under such unfavourable symptoms. I followed her counsel. But four days passed before I was able to leave my chamber. On the evening of the fifth I ordered my cabriolet, and resolved to make one visit more to Lifette, before I recommenced my journey to England.

"The lustre of the setting sun cast a beautiful animation on the calm and soothing

soothing hour. Those who have travelled in France will acknowledge that there is something in the summer scenery, the clear bland atmosphere, and the empurpled sky of a glowing evening, which exceeds the powers of a descriptive pen. Every thing looked tranquil; the air scarcely fanned the branches of the trees; and the more gloomy objects, as they grew less distinct by distance, seemed to sooth the mind by a sweet and melancholy sympathy. I sighed for poor Lisette; I lamented the fate of her dear Henry; and I shuddered at the horrors which usurpation diffused under the mask of freedom.

“As I approached the cottage, the road was strewn with flowers, and my heart was beginning to beat, when I saw six young girls, dressed all in white. They were returning from the funeral of Li-

fette. At a little distance the venerable mother of the rash Henry was kneeling before a cross which stood by the road side. She was praying fervently, and weeping bitterly. The scene was too afflicting. I hastened back to Abbeville, and on the same evening pursued my *route* towards Calais.

“Calumny’s wings are as swift as those of the whirlwind. A report had reached London, and thence been conveyed to Drumbender Castle, that I had been married, *à la revolution*, at Paris, to an English prisoner, and afterwards had been the avowed mistress of the abhorred Marat. The high sentiments of aristocracy which my kindred professed were no less insulted by the former report than their morality was wounded by the latter. I was met at Dover by a courier, with the commands of all my relations never again to disgrace them

them by either bearing the name or venturing into the presence of my family.

“ On my arrival in London I threw myself upon the mercy of my female friend. She denied all knowledge of me. I sought the protection of my destroyer. He was shocked at the immorality of avowing such a marriage, and assured me that he had never pardoned himself for having adopted such a republican custom. He added, that by claiming him as an husband, I should only blazon my own disgrace : but that if I would content myself to relinquish the name of wife, and conceal the transaction wholly from the world, he would ever be my friend and my protector. I had no remedy. I set out for Wales, to conceal my sorrow and my approaching anguish. All parts of the

habitable globe were at that moment indifferent to me.

“I had resided at the foot of a bleak and barren mountain near Crickhowel a fortnight, when my female friend came on a visit to a neighbouring mansion, and within a few hours after her arrival she discovered my solitary habitation. I had passed for the widow of an officer, and was kindly received by every family in the vicinity of the mountain: but, alas! the soothing dream of happiness was ended. My real name and situation were whispered about with a malevolent avidity: I was shunned, abhorred, and driven from the sanctuary of compunction to seek a new asylum—among strangers.

“I repaired to Bath, where, through the benevolence of a friend, I obtained a benefit-play. The unknown philanthropist was acquainted with my family,

family, and on condition that I would instantly depart, exerted his interest with the manager in my favour. My real name was concealed; for I had adopted that which I now bear. You must remember me : I spoke to you in the library ; I thanked you." She hesitated.

"Heavens! is it possible?" exclaimed Mrs. Morley. "Did you know the person who obtained the benefit-play for you?"

"I did not. He begged leave to conceal his name, and the profits were conveyed to me through the hands of the manager."

"You quitted Bath on the following day?" said Mrs. Morley.

"I did : but, alas ! my misfortunes did not find any alleviation from the benevolence of the unknown friend ; for I had not travelled three miles before I was
stopped

stopped by a highwayman, and robbed of my pocket-book containing the whole sum which I had received from the manager. With a few guineas, which were loose in my pocket, I was therefore obliged to continue my journey, more wretched, more distressed, and more desponding than ever.

“ On my return to my Welsh cottage I found it burnt to the ground, through the carelessness of the girl whom I had left to take care of it; and all my property, even my scanty wardrobe, which I had saved amidst the wrecks of fortune, was consumed in the conflagration. The girl, terrified, and conscious of the mischief she had occasioned, fled, and has not since been heard of. Her mother, overwhelmed with grief, consented to be my companion. We proceeded to Derbyshire, and it was under her care that you
found

found me and my dear offspring, the deserted Fanny."

"What was your reason for making Derbyshire the place of your retreat?" said Mrs. Morley.

Mrs. Sedgley blushed, and hesitated. After many unsuccessful efforts she at last replied, "Alas! I had heard that the object of my affections, the dear, the unkind father of my offspring, was in that part of England; and I had hoped that if it should please heaven to take me from this world of persecution, the unoffending infant, whom I should leave behind me, would be blessed with one friend to save it."

"Is it possible that you could love a monster who had so cruelly deceived you?" said Mrs. Morley.

"Ah!" replied Mrs. Sedgley, "how strangely are we prone to love, where we feel conscious that the affections of
our

our hearts are hopeless! The deserter of me and my sorrows was, to all other beings, the most amiable of mortals. The noblest philanthropy, the tenderest feelings, seemed to characterise his nature. So pure, so amiable was he in the opinion of all mankind, that even had I accused him of dishonour, the story would not have been believed; and I loved him too tenderly to be the destroyer of that reputation, the loss of which I felt but too acutely."

Mrs. Morley perceiving the pain which this conversation gave Mrs. Sedgley, forbore to question her farther on the subject; and a short time after Mrs. Sedgley had finished her pathetic story, the stage-coach stopped to take up two passengers. The remainder of the morning elapsed in melancholy rumination. Mrs. Sedgley was, in the opinion of Mrs. Morley, the victim of
lord

lord Francis Sherville, who, it was well known, had been on his continental travels ever since his minority. The female friend she justly concluded to be lady Penelope Pryer; and she forbore to make any further inquiries on a subject which seemed to present conviction so unequivocal.

C H A P. XXV.

THE esteem which Mrs. Morley entertained for lord Francis was considerably diminished by the recital of Mrs. Sedgley's story; yet the manner of his absenting himself from her society, the evident emotion which Mrs. Sedgley felt when she was informed that he was the protector of her infant, and his unaccountable seclusion in Derbyshire, convinced Mrs. Morley that she was not mistaken. They proceeded on their journey. The bosom of the amiable mother seemed considerable lightened of its burthen by the confidence she had placed in her old friend, though new companion. One of the passengers whom

whom they had taken up on the first day's journey was a young hero, who had just stepped out of the trammels of Juvenal into the fields of Bellona, equally qualified by the one and by the other; as learned as he was amiable, and as wise as he was valiant!

He had not been in the coach half an hour, which he had passed in silence, (for the son of Mars was bashful in the society of modest women,) when he proposed taking his seat as an outside passenger. The coachman informed him that there was no room excepting on the box. "I like it," said young Cæsar. "I am a good whip, and often drive father's nags, four in hand, twelve miles within the hour. All the jockies about our castle say I am the best hand at it of any in our county; and when the old one dies, I mean to have

have a phaeton and eight, to cut a dash, and to vex my neighbours."

"Very amiable!" said Mrs. Morley.

The coachman begged leave to decline submitting the reins to such desperate hands. "I cannot trust the lives of my passengers, or, what is more, of my horses, to such a harem-scarem," said he.

"Why I trust my own," said young Leadenhead, "and I am heir to four thousand a-year. I question if your passengers or your horses can say as much—Ask 'em."

"You'll upset us," said the coachman, sliding his hand under his hat, and looking doubtfully.

"Well! and if I do, I can afford to pay for all bones broken. You know father is as rich a man as any in the county.

county. You have had many a bumper with me in the butler's room at Plummet Castle! Come, don't be crabbed! I won't hurt any body; and if I do, I shan't mind paying a surgeon." 'Squire Cæsar now shaking half a score guineas between his hands so deafened the coachman's ears, that he archly smiling, replied, "If I was but sure, your honour, that you would not upset us, I would indulge you in your frolic."

"Try me: you can but find fault when the thing is done. If I should be laid in the ditch, it will not be the first time; and there is nothing like experience."

"Perhaps the ladies won't like it," said the coachman, looking towards the inside passengers.

"Who minds women?" interrupted young Leadenhead; "they can but squall,

squall, and there is an end of it. I often drive sister Bridget in my tandem, and she's as pleased as Punch. We never go to Plummet Castle but I upset half a dozen country lasses in the course of a summer. My tandem is the terror of the county: but father's money pays for all."

Two guineas slipped into the coachman's hand obtained for the son of Mars, though not of Minerva, that triumphal feat which, like the car of Achilles, was destined to roll over the vanquished. Young Leadenhead was also in one extremity invulnerable, though, like his prototype of the moment, his heel was the part which exposed him to the most imminent danger; for by forcibly striking it on the foot-board as he set off full speed, he startled the horses. They pursued their way without restraint till they passed a flock of geese. The hero dashed

dashed through the cackling multitude, annihilating at least a score ; while the bearer of the red flag pursued the vehicle with the fury of indignation till they were stopped by a turnpike gate, where a handful of gold again paid for the squire's frolic, and the coach continued its career with unabating velocity.

They now had to pass through a deep brook. The bold charioteer dashed into the stream. " Here we go ! sink or swim ! "

" Sink ? " cried a countryman, who was leaning over a bridge which crossed the swift current. True was the prediction ; for young Phaeton being at that moment, by a sudden jolt of the carriage, precipitated into the deepest part of the water, he consequently reached the bottom of the stream, head foremost. The horses, frightened by
the

the splashing of so ponderous a body, continued their course on full speed, till in the village they were stopped without doing farther mischief.

While the crowd assembled round the coach, the adventurous son of Mars, with one eye closed by his fall, came crying and swearing that he had been cheated out of his two guineas. "I paid for my feat," said he.

"Then why did you resign it?" inquired Mrs. Morley. "Perhaps you thought, like some politicians, that having bought your feat, you had a right to vacate it at pleasure."

"Better he should do that than drive his employers to their own destruction," said Mrs. Sedgley.

"I don't care what you say," cried the mortified squire: "I'll oblige father to prosecute. He is rich enough to make an example of those who want

to trick me out of my guineas. Father has as much money as any man in the county, and father would as soon punish any body that affronts me as he would look at them."

"Who has affronted you?" said Mrs. Morley. "You endangered our lives by your bad coachmanship."

"That's nothing," replied Gregory; "I have been cheated, and I will make father prosecute."

"Cheated! What do you mean by that?" said the coachman. "Will you fight it out? and if I have the best of it, why '*father*' can but prosecute after all."

At this moment the family coach luckily came in sight, and the weeping Hannibal mounting the box, escaped from the honest indignation of his accused adversary, while the lives of the terrified passengers were once more

committed to safe hands; which, had they not been contaminated by the poison gold, would not have resigned the reins to so daring an adventurer. Young Leadenhead proceeded to Plummet Castle, while the fair friends pursued their way towards their place of destination. Little more being said by the passengers, who were exhausted by the terrors they had encountered, Mrs. Morley beguiled the time by recording her reflections in the following

S O N N E T.

O, GOLD! thou pois'nous dross, whose subtle
power

Can change men's souls, or captive take the will!

Thou, whose fell potency can save or kill,
Illumine or darken life's precarious hour!

Thou tipp'st the leaves of Fancy's fairest flow'r

With glitt'ring tears: it feels the numbing chill

Creep through each fibre slow, while every ill
Of sordid misery blossoms to devour.

The

The bland and lust'rous morn of mental grace
Thy touch contaminates : thy sev'ring force
Breaks Friendship's charm, bids Honour's wreath
decay ;
Tears the pure blush of love from Beauty's face ;
Arms bold Oppression in her ruthless course,
While the wide groaning world, feels thy destruc-
tive sway.

C H A P. XXVI.

Mrs. MORLEY, on joining the dramatic company, made her *debut* in the character of Lady Teazle. The task was an arduous one: but the high spirit which upheld her under the pressure of unmerited persecutions did not, in this moment of trial, lose any part of its sustaining quality. She knew that the labour of talents is more honourable than the independence of indolence: she felt the glow of innate dignity, and little heeded the tinsel decorations of adventitious fortune. But Mrs. Morley was not aware of the trials she had to undergo in a profession which has too frequently been subjected to the petty scorn of upstart insignificance: she did
not

not recollect that the wealthy fool can always point the shaft of prejudice against the children of Genius and Misfortune ; and that the liberal patronage of talents can alone spring from minds through a sympathizing similitude of taste, feeling, education, and refinement: for the proud, the vulgar, and the ostentatious are ever ready to condemn that which, not possessing, they do not comprehend. The success which attended her first essay surpassed even her most sanguine expectations. She was the pupil of Nature ; her feelings were spontaneous, her ideas expanded, and her judgment correct. She scorned to avail herself of that factitious mummery, that artificial, disgusting trick, which deludes the senses by exciting laughter at the expence of the understanding. She was lively and unaffected : her smiles were exhilarating,

her sighs were pathetic; her voice was either delicately animating or persuasively soothing: she neither giggled convulsively nor wept methodically: she was the thing she seemed, while even the perfection of her art was Nature.

Mrs. Morley's time and her friendship were divided with Mrs. Sedgley, whose dramatic genius taking the tragic walk, strewed no thorns of contention between her and her contemporary. The fair heroines participated both the labour and the popularity of the company; and their mutual sorrows naturally produced that friendship which meliorated the destiny that pursued them.

Mrs. Morley was neither elated nor changed by the fame which rapidly followed her footsteps. She had good sense to consider the possession of the
most

most illustrious distinction, the celebrity of genius, as a gift of Nature which was destined, in a great degree, to compensate for the frowns of Fortune. Just at this period, when Mrs. Morley was in the zenith of her reputation, the manager proposed removing the company to another town in the same county. The names of Denison and Sedgley had been borne on the wings of Fame even to the most remote parts of the kingdom, and every patron of dramatic talents (for patronage and ostentation are frequently synonymous) impatiently awaited their arrival.

The dramatic heroines were both remarkably handsome; they had resided in the metropolis; they were extolled for their exquisite taste in the choice of their habiliments; and they were both supposed to be better born than what low minds imagine the criterion of respectability.

spectability. Curiosity therefore induced some of the minor families to invite them once, for their own amusement and the gratification of their friends. The invitation to meet the new actresses was whispered as though they were meditating to exhibit something monstrous and extraordinary. The females begged it might not be mentioned beyond the proposed circle, and the males prepared for a great deal of flirtation with '*the ladies*,' by way of anticipating their Green-Room gallantries when they should become more intimately acquainted. They piqued themselves upon their polite condescension, and made no doubt but their easy familiarity would take from them the erroneous imputation of pride and vulgarity.

Expectation was not disappointed by the high report which Fame had made
of

of the twin constellations in the dramatic hemisphere. Mrs. Sedgley was, after her first appearance in the Grecian Daughter, pronounced a juvenile Siddons; while the lively and engaging Martha was greeted, in the sportive walks of Thalia, with boundless adoration. The easy elegance of a Farren, who had frequently trod the same boards with considerable *eclat*, and the genuine playful graces of the queen of smiles—the attractive Jordan, were blended in the person and talents of Mrs. Morley. She was the idol of the day: but she was set up by caprice, and surrounded by all the demons of envy, slander, and malevolence.

“Where did she come from?”

Nobody knew.

Conjecture was busy. The name of Denison, which she still assumed, was highly respectable: but she had no

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letters

letters of recommendation to the opulent leaders of theatrical patronage; she had no peers to protect her, no women of rank to lead her into the path of popularity; and, above all, she wanted that arrogant effrontery, that unblushing self-conceit, which has in many instances supplied the deficiency of more substantial merit. She stood before the tribunal of the public on the basis of her own talents: but it was undermined by arts which even the most transcendent genius cannot always counteract.

Mrs. Morley played several characters with unbounded applause. The modesty of innate worth is not like the obtrusive impertinence of false pretensions. She looked not forward to any thing beyond a decent independence; she sought not to attain that eminence which might teach her to forget those friends who, in her days of humble industry,

dustry, approved, sanctioned, and esteemed her. She knew that Fortune was a dazzling phantom, a delusive, glittering *ignis fatuus*, which was apt to mislead the weak and giddy brain beyond the bounds of gratitude and reflection. Mrs. Morley's popularity was boundless: but, reader, the approbation of her patrons was wholly confined to the boards of scenic exhibition: the aristocracy of wealth had little to do with the aristocracy of genius; for great and admired talents, where they are entirely separated from the advantages of fortune, oftener prove evils than blessings to their possessors. They excite envy, they awaken jealousy, and they nourish abhorrence; because the master of great riches, amidst the very plenitude of enjoyments, cannot bear to behold the child of Penury and Genius receiving that homage which

the liberal heart bestows spontaneously, while he is obliged to purchase those smiles which he knows to be factitious.

Mrs. Morley had to struggle against the all-potent tyrant Prejudice. She had engaged in a profession which vulgar minds, though they are amused by its labours, frequently condemn with un pitying asperity. She was engaging, discreet, sensible, and accomplished: but she was an actress, and therefore deemed an unfit associate for the wives and daughters of the proud, the opulent, and the unenlightened.

Among others, the wealthy tribe of the Leadenheads were most rigidly fastidious in their opinions of social distinctions. Mr. Humphry Leadenhead was the head of his family; and no person had ever been malignant enough to deny that, in every acceptation of the word,

word, he did honour to his name—a name which he had scorned to change, though wealth had accumulated and homage followed his footsteps, for more than twenty years, through all the mazy walks of unremitting industry.

The race of the Leadenheads had gradually risen from obscurity, and they were now of the most weighty consideration in the great scale of worldly importance : but, alas ! the swift wing of time had waisted from their memory the means by which they had acquired their consequence. They were too exalted to reflect, too wealthy to be humble. The Miss Leadenheads were, in the vicinity of Plummet Castle, wondered at as beauties of the first order ; while young squire Gregory was considered as a prodigy of learning and intrepidity ; though his knowledge extended not beyond the game-laws, and
his

his valour had never been evinced in any scene of action excepting that of a cock-fight or a bull-baiting.

At the age of nineteen young Leadenhead had been honoured with a commission in the army, and anticipation already named him as the hero of the family. Mr. Leadenhead senior, though he had attained considerable wealth in a long series of animated traffic, fancied that his consequence was augmented by his son's elevation. At one time the young squire was emulous of a black gown: but reflection suggested to the family that the sable habit might lead to gloomy reflections; and that the basis of their present opulence being of a dark complexion, the lustre of military achievements might be deemed more desirable as trophies to adorn the Leadenhead mausoleum.

Mr.

Mr. Humphry Leadenhead, like many of his name, was not wholly divested of certain prejudices. Among others, he deemed all human perfections of little importance, when placed in comparison with those of ancestry and fortune. With this opinion, it had been the ambition of his prosperous days to see his sons and daughters mingling the deep tide of commerce with the glittering, shallow stream of titled insignificance. His undeviating counsel to his children was, "Enoble your family; buy honours, dignities, titles, precedence, and connections; and above all things consult the book of heraldry as the book of fate."

Shortly after Mrs. Morley's arrival, the young squire became enamoured of her attractions. He was her constant attendant, her avowed admirer. Mrs.
Morley

Morley passed for a widow; and the pride of the Leadenheads was deeply wounded by the apprehension that the heir of the family should degrade himself by an alliance with a strolling actress; while Mrs. Morley looked as far above the pretensions of her suitor, as worth and talents have a right to soar beyond the track of vulgar association.

In order to divert young Leadenhead's attention from the pursuit which occasioned so much family inquietude, a party was proposed to York races. A new landau, which had been purchased in the metropolis the preceding summer, with four horses, contained Humphry and his wife, the young squire, and Miss Bridget; forming a group not unlike the family of the Wrongheads, in their memorable journey to London.

Indeed

Indeed it had long been the recreation of the Leadenheads to visit the metropolis once a-year, for their edification in the mysteries of politeness; and for the supreme gratification of standing at the windows of an hotel near St. James's, to see the nobility go to and from court on his Majesty's birthday.

Previous to their departure for York races, the old and unvarying lesson, "Ennoble your family," was again and again repeated. Young Gregory was tolerably well-looking, and not likely to meet with any impediment in the road to preferment from those gothic stumbling-blocks, modesty and self-knowledge. The squire was heir to a splendid fortune; and he had, by many striking examples in his own family occurrences, already discovered that effrontery is the infallible substitute for every

every deficiency of personal or mental importance.

A waggon load of finery had arrived from the metropolis to adorn the females for this important expedition; all the newest fashions had been purchased; and they fancied, because they wore the habiliments of distinguished women, that they were also of the most illustrious consequence in the broad scale of popularity. Miss Bridget was strictly enjoined not even to look at any persons who had not a title to recommend them; and young Gregory was with most pompous solemnity commanded for once to forget the stable and the butler's pantry, and to assume the manners of a man of consequence. But the most important injunction was, that of never speaking to people of his own rank in life: the sons of industry and commerce were no longer fit companions

nions for the heir of Plummet Castle. He was destined to soar in a more exalted sphere, to forget the beaten track of fordid labour, and to prove that the Leadenheads were of the most weighty importance in the scale of social intercourse. He could buy "*golden* opinions from all sorts of people," and therefore was qualified to follow the unbridled bent of his own refined and polished inclinations.

On their arrival at York, nearly the whole hotel was engaged for the opulent guests. Five guineas were sent to the bell-ringers to ring the consequence of the wealthy visitors in the ears of an admiring multitude; minute inquiries were made after names of persons of distinction, and cards were prepared to return visits even before they had received a single proof of their being known in the gay and busy circle.

Miss

Miss Bridget had studied a fashionable demeanor the whole morning, and Gregory had dressed himself in his new regimentals, when the master of the house informed them that a lady of fashion had been making particular inquiries about them.

Bridget went nearly into hysterics, and Gregory jumped almost out of regimental splendors at this propitious information; while Mrs. Leadenhead desired their host to take their cards to the lady, and to inform her that they should be proud to have the honour of seeing her to dinner.

"The lady did not seem to know you, madam," said the messenger.

"How should she?" cried Gregory. "Every thing must have a beginning. Father did not make his fortune in a day."

"Brother,"

"Brother," interrupted Miss Bridget, "what is that to the purpose?"

"It is proper that people should know who we are," said Mrs. Leadenhead, "and Gregory is very right. We did not travel so far from Plummet Castle to be taken for nobody. The Leadenheads are not ashamed of their name."

"They need not, madam," said their host, "for they do it infinite honour."

Gregory giving the host a smart stroke upon the shoulder, cried, "That was civil, and well spoken, and we will drink a bottle together, to become better acquainted. Father's purse-strings are loose, and I'm determined to be jolly."

"Heavens!" exclaimed Miss Bridget, "will you never know your own importance?" Then turning to the master of the hotel, she added, "My brother

brother is a little eccentric in his manners, and sometimes forgets himself."

"Evidently, madam," replied their host. "It is a natural failing."

"Well," cried Mrs. Leadenhead, "you may take our cards; and if her grace or her ladyship chooses to notice the visit, we shall be on the course in our landau and four, and at the ball this evening."

"Yes, take the cards," added Gregory; "a few scraps of paper are no object. We can afford to buy more when they are gone. Besides, we brought six packs for the week's visits. We people of fortune don't value trifles; for who knows, among the nobles we may be acquainted with, but Bridget may light on a husband; or I may get a wife to take back, and make the folks stare at Plummet Castle."

It

It may not be improper here to inform the reader, that among other singular opinions which were entertained by this eccentric family, they felt an unconquerable predilection for every thing that wore a semblance of nobility. For this reason their houses were all named castles, halls, and places. Plummet-Castle, Golden-Hall, and Leadenhead-Place were the well-known habitations of this illustrious lineage; for to live in a house that was not dubbed with a splendid name would have been, to them, the very acme of degradation.

The secondary mania of the Leadenheads was that of seeing their consequence recorded in the periodical publications of the time. The arrival of a Leadenhead in London or at a fashionable watering-place was duly announced with all pompous panegyric, and Mrs.

Leadenhead, in the streets of the metropolis, fancied that she was as well known and as highly respected as in the vicinity of Plummet-Castle. Indeed half way, on the score of calculation, she was right in her conjectures.

Three hours were wasted in selecting a dress for Miss Bridget to receive the illustrious visitor. This she thought too fine, that too simple; one was unbecoming; another was ill-made. Gregory, who was present at the debate, advised his sister to find out her grace's or her ladyship's woman, and to bribe her for the sight of one of her lady's new dresses. "You need not grudge the money," said the young squire, "for father can afford it."

Miss Bridget thought the plan a good one: but Mrs. Leadenhead objected to the idea of permitting the opulent family of Plummet-Castle to demean them-

themselves by copying any body. "I like to be original," said she, with an air of self-importance.

"And so you are," cried Gregory, "and originals we are all likely to be; for nobody will take the pains to imitate us, unless we learn something of people of fashion. Why there is Bridget, she is no more like a London woman of quality than I am like king Solomon."

"Then I have little resemblance, God knows!" retorted Bridget. "But who made you so clever? You are but just come from school; and I am sure you never learnt any thing there but to break windows and to overset whiskies. You were the greatest dunce in the school, and that every body said; so you need not talk about wisdom and self-importance."

“I don’t want the first, while father can leave me four thousand a-year,” replied Gregory; “and as for the last, there is enough in the family already. The Leadenheads will always make their way, while they can pay for smoothing the path, I’ll warrant them. Father’s money is the best passport, all the world over.” Miss Bridget now, after making a variety of grimaces at Gregory, which terminated by a smart box on the ear that set him crying, darted out of the room to settle her features into a nobility simper against the important trial of the evening.

At the ball, the indefatigable family became acquainted with lady Penelope Pryer, sir Lionel Beacon, and the accomplished Julia Bradford. Mrs. Leadenhead was more consequential than ever; and Bridget was delighted, even to ecstasy, in being at last noticed
by

by a woman of lady Penelope's rank and appearance. She hung upon her arm during the intervals between the dances, admired her dress, imitated her demeanor, curtsied whenever lady Pen nodded to her familiar friends; and declared, that since she left school she had never passed so delightful an evening.

Gregory, amidst the scene of triumph, entertained himself by joking with the fiddlers, and playing tricks with the waiters; not without frequent frowns and nods from Mrs. Leadenhead, and more than once a whisper, to recollect the old maxim of ennobling his family.

On the following day the whole party met on the race-course. The Leadenheads had opened their landau, though the weather was intensely cold, in order to display the feathers which towered above the brows of the female part of

the family. Notwithstanding the waggon-load of decorations, a taylor had been at work all night to make Miss Bridget a new-fashioned dress similar to one which lady Penelope had worn at the ball on the preceding evening. It was composed of purple sarfnet, in the form of a great coat, and trimmed with silver edging. But what was Bridget's sorrow when she beheld lady Pen on the race-course in a plain brown habit and a straw hat, without a single plume to dispute the palm of rivalry: she absolutely shed tears; while Gregory consoled her by reminding her that "father could afford to pay for twenty gowns, and that she would do right to have a new one every hour while she staid at the races."

During the second morning of display on the course, Gregory unfortunately drove his tandem over an old
 woman

woman who was earnestly employed in vociferating the list of horses. He nevertheless continued to gallop round the lines, till the populace, incensed at his unfeeling conduct, pursued and stopped him.

"You have broken an old woman's leg," said a by-stander.

"Well, tell father to pay for it," said Gregory; "he's rich enough to buy twenty old women, and their legs into the bargain."

"It is a pity, then, that he does not purchase a little understanding for his son," said the observer.

"I can do without it," replied Gregory, shewing a handful of guineas.

"I see you can," said the spectator. "Nothing can be more evident; and since you are so able to supply your own deficiency, you may as well do some-

thing for the necessities of the old woman."

"I don't like old women," cried Gregory.

"You have no right to kill them, notwithstanding," said the monitor.

At this moment Sir Lionel came up to the carriage. The poor woman was brought in the arms of the multitude.

"You'll not win the race, my old one!" cried Gregory; "you are broken down!"

"By running against a post," said the by-stander.

Sir Lionel threw the woman his purse, and ordered her to be taken care of; while the family of the Leadenheads generously subscribed three guineas, to pay the surgeon for setting the limb; wisely remarking, "It was fortunate for
her

her that she happened to meet with an opulent family."

On the following morning Mrs. Leadenhead ordered their wardrobe to be unpacked, and hung round the dressing-room, where herself and her daughter purposed receiving visitors. Miss Bridget was dressed in a white farinet powdering-gown, and Mrs. Leadenhead wore a scarlet riding-habit, lined with blue, with blue cuffs and collar. She had heard that it was the Royal Hunt, only reversing the colours; and she therefore, to keep up the contrast, ordered it to be adopted as the *habit de chasse* of Plummet-Castle.

She had not been seated in studied negligence many minutes when sir Lionel made his appearance. "By Jupiter!" exclaimed he, "an old clothes shop!" at the same time glancing round at the expensive decorations

tions which were displayed in every direction.

“What, are you going to set up a masquerade warehouse?” continued the sportive baronet. “I propose a masked ball this evening, and shall send the whole county to sport your wardrobe. By all that is comical, this is amazingly astonishing! Why you are a famous family, and worth paying to amuse the populace! But what have you done with your gala suit, Miss Leatherhead? Where is your fine purple and silver? Hang me if I don’t believe you borrowed it from old Pen. I told her never to wear it again, for it made her look like a travelling show-woman.”

Miss Bridget was near fainting.

“Are you going to be married in that fine white dress?” continued he.
 “Why you look like Tilburina, mad
 in

in white fatin ! And as for you, my old girl, you want nothing but three horses and a trumpeter to rival the notorious Mrs. What-d'ye-call-her, that rides at the amphitheatre. Do you mean to sport such famous figures on the course ? By Jupiter, you will only frighten the horses !" Mrs. Leadenhead looked aghast, when lady Pen entered the apartment.

"Heavens !" exclaimed her ladyship, "I did not know that they were come !"

"Whom !" said Mrs. Leadenhead, smiling through the flush of indignation.

"The strolling actors ! I see their wardrobe is already unpacked, and a very gay one it is. I suppose you are come to admire it ?"

Not a syllable was uttered in reply. "Well ! this is charming !" said lady

Penelope. "Suppose we bespeak a play—the Provoked Husband, or All the World's a Stage, or the Devil to Pay, or Every Man in his Humour? It will be delightful!" So saying, lady Pen and sir Lionel departed, leaving the mortified Leadenheads to weep over their insulted magnificence.

C H A P. XXVII.

Miss Bradford had been recently accustomed to fashionable life; and adopted a more subtle line of conduct in the scene of action. She humoured the excentric opinions of young Gregory; praised his polished manners; commended his familiar and easy conversation; ventured to accompany him on the course in his tandem; and played her cards so skilfully, that she completely won the heart of her companion. He danced with her at the next ball; he betted with her on the race; gave the waiters a guinea to drink her health; he made the fiddlers play all the morning in the hall of her hotel; he stole her faded bouquet, and wore it in his helmet;

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he swore to call his favourite pointer, Julia ; and declared that a trip to Scotland would to him be the most desirable of all earthly gratifications.

Promptitude and perseverance are said to be the promoters of great and glorious achievements. Four days had scarcely shone on the Leadenheads, since their initiation in the arcanum of fashionable propensities, when an elopement astonished the admiring multitude. Lady Penelope and sir Lionel Beacon, having also set out for London, on the same morning, without even condescending to take leave of their new intimates, Humphrey, and indeed the whole family concluded, for anticipation often keeps pace with desire, that Gregory had carried off a titled prize, in the fair person of lady Pen Pryer. Large sums were sent to the metropolis to purchase splendid accounts of the family elevation in all the diurnal

nal prints. The marriage of a Leadenhead was a weighty business.

The interesting process of the courtship till the hour of decisive triumph, was described in a large type in every paper; while the whole town either read the pompous detail as an amusing farago of folly, or wisely passed it over, as a new instance of that inordinate vanity which, on various occasions, had distinguished the family.—Among other accounts the following appeared in one of the most popular daily prints:

‘ It is confidently asserted, that Gregory Leadenhead esquire, heir to the
 ‘ opulent Humphrey Leadenhead of
 ‘ Plummet Castle, is shortly to be favoured with the fair hand of the right
 ‘ honourable lady Penelope Pryer,
 ‘ daughter of John James Edward, earl
 ‘ of Brentford and Isleworth, knight of
 ‘ the most noble order of the Bath,
 ‘ and

• and nearly related to all the most illustrious families in the three kingdoms! The accomplished bride is • endowed with the most superlative • mental and personal qualifications! She • is said to be mistress of all the living • and dead languages! To understand • the most profound mysteries of astrology and theology, mythology, philosophy, etymology, and physiology! • She is well versed in philosophy, psalmography, biography, topography, • orthography, and phytography! She • is an adept in geometry, electricity, • chemistry, trigonometry, physiognomy, • botany, metaphysics, history, algebra, mechanics, optics astronomy, • and the occult sciences!! She is perfect mistress of music, poetry, painting, sculpture, architecture, physics, • and anatomy!! She is the first dancer, singer, orator, writer, equestrian, • and

' and pedestrian in the known world !
 ' And she not only ennobles the Leaden-
 ' heads, by quartering in the heraldry of
 ' of four dukes, eight earls, twelve ba-
 ' rons, fourteen baronets, and sixty-five
 ' members of the British parliament,
 ' but by the unexampled accomplish-
 ' ments of her mind and the unequalled
 ' brilliancy of her talents ! ! ! !

' Grand preparations are now making
 ' at Plummet-Castle for this joyful oc-
 ' casion; and the whole country in
 ' which this opulent family resides, is
 ' invited to partake of an entertainment
 ' the most elegant, sumptuous, expen-
 ' sive, tasteful, and profuse that ever was
 ' seen in this or any other country.'

This splendid eulogium, which cost
 the family two days of deep and laborious
 rumination, was the theme of nine days
 wonder. The Leadenhead family, from
 the senior 'squire to the meanest stable-
 boy,

boy, was frantic with exultation. Letters were dispatched to the metropolis, to hire a splendid mansion in one of the western squares for the ensuing winter. The arms of the new landau were effaced, to make room for the emblazoned quarterings of the exalted alliance. The pages of heraldry were ransacked, to explore every iota of armorial distinction; and the Miss Leadenheads sent off an express to London, for a fresh cargo of fashions, to pay and to receive the wedding visits. Plummet Castle was to be new furnished for the reception of the noble relative; and twenty dozen of cards were ordered to be struck off, with the name of the right honourable lady Penelope Leadenhead, against the visits of condescension to the associates of their almost forgotten rank in society.

These important preparations being fully arranged by letters to agents both
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in town and country, and the first fluttering emotions of joy having settled into a fixed consciousness of newly created importance, the family once more set out for the castle. White cockades were displayed in the hats of the domestics; in every town and village through which they passed, the bells were taught to tell the glorious tidings.—On their arrival at Plummet-Castle, good humour, mirth, and revelry surprised the peasantry; they had never before witnessed such extraordinary condescension; and the illumined eyes of the joyful multitude were only surpassed in brilliancy by the illumined windows of the family mansion.

But direful was the change when the bride returned to share the honours of the day! No title! no rank! plain Mrs. Leadenhead! the thought was insupportable. She had not even to boast
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an illegitimate alliance with any branches of nobility. She could not even produce a shadow of probability that she had noble blood in her veins; or exult in the patronage of those who credulously believed themselves her relations. Miss Julia Bradford was nobody, and *nobody* was obliged to endure the alliance.

Though the bride was not illustriously born, the Leadenheads had every reason to rejoice in the prospect of increasing honours. What she wanted in quality she made up in quantity;—it could not be said that she brought nothing into the family; she had been indefatigable in the labour of dignifying it to posterity; for on the fourth month after her alliance with young Gregory, she presented him with a lusty boy, whose veins might boast a stream flowing

ing from a source as ancient as the Heptarchy.

This abrupt augmentation of family honours, excited no small surprize in the vicinity of Plummet Castle. For Humphrey Leadenhead had forgotten in his mania for noble patronage, to secure the affections of the virtuously humble. Ostentation had been displayed on birth-days, and days of public rejoicing; yet had the Leadenheads never been born, society would not have been less embellished; and the annihilation of the whole race would not have occasioned one single hour of mourning.

But the unexpected present which the squire had received, did not so completely humble the pride of the family as the unfortunate discovery that Mrs. Denison, the strolling actress, was the sister of the elegant Julia. This was indeed a thunderbolt of destruction to
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the ambitious hopes of Humphrey Leadenhead; the bastard-bar, which was destined to darken the glow of armorial bearings, they considered as the misfortune of fashionable life; but the vulgar necessities of an itinerant beggar were too degrading not to be felt; though it was the first time that the Leadenhead family had ever been known to feel for a person in Mrs. Morley's situation.

Julia and her heroic squire, by mutual consent, signed articles of separation. They returned to London, and the enlightened husband shortly after joined his regiment, then quartered in Dorsetshire. While the disappointed Leadenheads vented their regrets at Plummet Castle, and lamented the hour when they first indulged the hope of ennobling their family.

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The misfortune which had humbled the heir of Humphrey, in his *debut* on the theatre of fashion, was not more severe than that which attended Martha on the boards of necessity. The arrogance of appearing in the county where the Leadenheads were persons of such importance was deemed unpardonable. A combination was formed to punish the offender: gold flew about in every direction; power was exercised in every subordinate circle of society. The young squire treated all the grooms and stable-boys in the county; heading the phalanx himself, into the upper gallery: and Mrs. Morley was received with such marked indignation by the family and their suborned confederates, that her appearance again on the dramatic boards was prevented by the manager. She was therefore discharged from the company, and once more driven to
wander

wander over the globe, the victim of persecution. Mrs. Morley, on the day of her dismissal from her scenic labour, published in the county paper these stanzas:

Unhappy is the pilgrim's lot
 Who wanders o'er the desert heath;
 By friends and by the world forgot—
 Whose only hope—depends on death!
 Yet, may he smile when memory shews,
 The tort'ring stings, the weary woes,
 Which forc'd his bosom to abide
 The *vulgar scorn* of VULGAR PRIDE.

Forlorn is he, who on the sand
 Of some bleak isle his hovel rears;
 Or shipwreck'd on the breezy strand,
 The billow's deep'ning murmur hears.
 Yet, when his aching eyes survey,
 The white sails gliding far away,
 He feels, he shall no more abide
 The *vulgar scorn* of VULGAR PRIDE.

Sadly the exil'd traveller strays
 Benighted in some forest drear;
 Where by the paly star-light rays
 He sees no hut, no hovel near.

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The fire-eyed wolf, which howls for prey,
Glares hideous in his briery way;
Yet, can he smile! 'for he has borne
The sneers of PRIDE and VULGAR SCORN!

Of all the ill's the feeling mind
Is destin'd in this world to share;
Of pain and poverty combin'd,
Of friendship's frown, or love's despair!
Still reason arms the conscious soul,
And bids it ev'ry pang control,—
Save, when the patient heart is tried
By VULGAR SCORN and VULGAR PRIDE.

Go wealth, and in the hermit's cell,
Behold that peace thou can'st not have;
Go rank, and list the passing knell
That warns thee, to oblivion's grave!
Go pow'r, and where the peasant's breast
Enjoys the balm of conscious rest,
Confess, that VIRTUE can deride
The VULGAR SCORN of VULGAR PRIDE!

This effusion of a proudly indignant
mind did not produce the desired
effect. The whole family of the
Leadenheads read the stanzas; but
they

they were too refined in their satire for inferior intellects. Humphrey declared they were nonsense. Gregory took them for Greek. Bridget said they were vulgar, low, and impertinent; and Mrs. Leadenhead pronounced them incomprehensible. Yet the printer of the paper, in which they appeared, was menaced with a prosecution, because the whole county was unanimous in the opinion, that the burthen of the song was peculiarly applicable to the Leadenhead family.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



